



Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York, N. Y., Post Office.

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March 27, 1894.

No. 870.

\$2.50
a Year.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY BEADLE AND ADAMS.
No. 98 WILLIAM STREET, NEW YORK.

Price,
5 cents.

Vol. XXXIV.

DEADWOOD DICK, Jr., IN MEXICO.

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER.



"DO YE HEAR?" CRIED PETE PARROT, POINTING. "THAT GIRL'S LIFE IS AT STAKE!"

Deadwood Dick, Jr., in Mexico;

OR,

The Girl Prisoner of the Madhouse.

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER,

AUTHOR OF "DEADWOOD DICK" NOVELS, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A FRIENDLY WARNING. EL ESPIA.

"WULL, hyer we aire, Dicky, boy."

"Yes, here we are, sure enough, Pete."

"You bet!" chipped in Poll, from her perch.

And there they were, having just arrived by train.

Where? In the city of Mexico—in that land of lazy leisure—of drones and padrones.

It was evening, and a full moon shed a glorious radiance over the city, making a picture not easily forgotten.

Deadwood Dick, Jr., and his pard, Pete Parrot, the latter with his parrot perched upon his shoulder as usual, attracted general attention from the crowd at the station.

"What's the first move?" Pete asked, as they stepped out upon the platform.

"First of all we must dop the Greaser garb," Dick made answer. "You will make a fine Don of the old *regime*, while I am just about dark enough and handsome enough to pass for a Don of the day—a Donna killer and swell senior. What say, Polly?"

"Polly want booze!"

"I second ther motion," struck in Pete. "Ef I wasn't so infarnel dry, Dick, I'd settle with ye fer sayin' I'd make a Greaser, but as it is I can't. My throat is like them 'ar hot plains we had ter cross to git hyer, all parched up. Ther bird has got sense, Dicky; let's irrigate."

"All right; just as you say."

So, leaving the station they followed the crowd, and soon espied a saloon of inviting external appearance.

Oh, yes, the saloon is there, the City of Mexico is fast becoming modernized and "civilized," and to a considerable degree Americanized as well. Who would see Mexican life pure and simple must seek it elsewhere, now.

Dick and Pete entered.

The sign without was in Spanish, but the man at the bar was unmistakably an American.

"This looks like home, anyhow, ter begin with," cried Pete, loud enough to be overheard, and the man behind the bar looked quickly in his direction, the natives following his example in a more lazy fashion.

"And that sounds like home, too, pards," the man exclaimed. "It does a fellow good to hear plain United States once in awhile. Step right up and nominate your poison, and we'll drink your welcome to the City of Mexico. What will you take?"

"Whisky, for me," cried the parrot on Pete's shoulder.

"Blue blisterin' blazes!" the proprietor ejaculated, falling back against his array of bottles in amazement. "Is that thing bird or devil?"

"Oh, it's a bird, so don't be skart," answered Pete. "Let me interdoose Miss Polly Parrot, sir. Poll, this gentleman is—But, I guess I'm gettin' ahead too fast, now, fer I don't know."

"My name is Tobin Tamarack, and I commenced my earthly pilgrimage away up in the greenest part of Vermont. What's your name?"

"My front name is Pete, and the rest of it is plain to be seen."

"Pete Plain-to-be-seen?"

"Ha! ha! ha! No, you don't fetch et, pard. That ain't ther name, but et's plain to be seen all ther same."

"Then I give it up. What is it?"

"Parrot, of course."

"Ha! ha! ha! That's a good one, sure enough. You'll take another with me on that. But, look at the bird!"

The drinks had been poured, and the parrot had jumped down from Pete's shoulder and was helping herself out of his glass, to the amazement and amusement of all observers.

"Hyar! Poll! murder seize ye!" cried Pete. "Pull your whistle out of that, you guzzler, you! My drink first!"

"Set 'em up for Polly!"

"All right. Pour out another fer ther bird, Tamarack."

"Here it is, and I must say that beats all I ever heard. But, introduce your pard."

Dick had said nothing.

"Sartainly. Mr. Mose Mantell, sir. Mosey, Mr. Tobin Tamarack. May ye both live till ye die, and may yer shadders never grow less."

"Thank you," rejoined the proprietor, giving his hand to Dick as he spoke. And in much lower tone he quickly added:

"I took you to be somebody else, and I wanted to give you just a word of warning in a friendly way."

"Whom did you take me to be?" Dick asked.

"Deadwood Dick, Junior."

"Then you were expecting him?"

"Yes, after somethin' I heard last night."

"And what was that?"

"Some men were talking about him."

"For him or against him?"

"Against him. But, you seem interest-

ed." "And so I am, for I am Deadwood Dick, Junior, my good man."

"Hist!" the proprietor warned, in tone lower still. "Be guarded, for some ears here understand English."

In order to give them a chance to say more, having heard this as well as Dick, Pete now began a loud tirade against his parrot, just to draw the attention of the men around.

"You speak as if there is danger," said Dick.

"And there is, for you."

"From what direction?"

"Pay attention and I'll tell you. Two men in here last night were talking about you, and they expected you would be here. Their names were Fernando Remolon and Diego Soslayo. You want to be on your guard against them. I don't know what their scheme is, but I heard that much, and I made up my mind if any strangers dropped into my place I'd see who they were and warn them, that is, if I struck you."

"Greatly obliged to you, anyhow, Mr. Tamarack. And, here's your health," in a louder voice, raising his glass and dashing off what it contained.

"Set 'em up again!" cried Poll.

"You darn feathered hog!" yelled Pete. "Do you want to git corned right off to oncet?"

"Set 'em up again! Set 'em up again!" the parrot yelled. "Polly want booze!"

The crowd laughed, but only moderately, since but few could understand. All could hear and see, however, and they seemed to appreciate the situation, and the parrot was a novelty to them.

"I'll set you up again, blast ye!" roared Pete, in pretended anger, as he grabbed the bird by the neck and feathers, doubled her up and crammed her into the big side pocket. "You jest stay thar till I git ready to let ye out, fer yer smartness."

Then turning to the crowd, he added in good Spanish:

"That bird is my torment, gentlemen. Drinks more whisky than would float a canoe."

Pete could talk the language; therefore, and as Dick had also a smattering of it suffi-

cient for ordinary purposes, they were not at loss in that land of another tongue.

Dick returned the proprietor's favor by treating again, and when this was over, he tossed a coin on the bar and signaled the crowd to round up, a signal which did not have to be translated to make them understand, and he and Pete left the place.

"What was he sayin' to ye?" Pete immediately asked.

"Warned me against two men, Fernando Remolon and Diego Soslayo. Said he had heard—"

"That's the cuss!" Pete cried, excitedly. "That's the name I was tryin' to think of all the way, Dicky! That was it; Diego Soslayo. But, what was et he heard 'em sayin'?"

Dick repeated what the man Tamarack had told him.

"All right; let 'em open ther ball jest as soon as they want to," Pete savagely muttered. "They'll find us mounted, and all spurred and bristled, I kalkylate."

"Then this fellow Soslayo is the man from Arizona?"

"Ther same cuss."

"And you will know him at sight?"

"I ruther opine I wull, ef he don't disguise too heavy."

"Then we are somewhat prepared for them, so let them set the ball rolling, as you say."

"Yas, and hyer's a store where we can probably tog out in Mexic fashion, so let's amble in and make ther dicker. We'll feel more at home."

So they entered, but had not observed a short, heavy, bushy-whiskered man who had followed them from the station, and who was spying on them in a rather determined manner.

CHAPTER II.

TERRIBLY ACCUSED. AN ESCAPE

WHEN Deadwood Dick and Pete Parrot came out of the store their appearance was wholly changed.

No one but would have taken them for natives, for they were Mexicans in every particular of dress, from hats to boots, and their hats were literally "no slouches."

If there is one thing more than another the Mexican prides himself upon, it is his *capote*. A hat that costs no more than twenty dollars is not much of a head covering; and very often a man wears two hats at the same time.

The women wear none.

"What's your name?" asked Pete, in Spanish.

"Marcos Parroco," Dick replied. "What is yours, Pete?"

"A parson, hey? That's purty good, anyhow. Call me Pedro Papagayo."

"Ha! ha! Still stick to Pete Parrot, even in Spanish, do you? That's good enough."

At that instant a shot was heard close behind them, a bullet screamed past their heads, and a *mendigo* who was in the act of approaching them for alms, threw up his arms and fell almost at their feet.

Deadwood Dick wheeled instantly, revolver in hand.

Several men were behind him and Pete, and now they were beginning to shout and wildly gesticulate.

"Murder!" cried one. "He has shot a man!"

"Officer!" yelled another. "Murder has been done!"

"Yes, and which of you dogs did it?" demanded Pete Parrot, hotly.

"That man did it," declared a fellow with bushy whiskers. "He is the guilty assassin."

He pointed straight at Deadwood Dick.

"You're a liar!" cried Dick, savagely.

"The shot came from behind me."

"Caspita! That is remarkable. Why,

see, he has the weapon in his hand yet, my good friends."

"Capture him!"

"Take him!"

"Keep off with you!" warned Dick and Pete together.

A crowd was rapidly forming, and an officer was seen running up. It was a big sensation for that sleepy city.

"What has happened?" the officer demanded.

"That man shot a beggar because he asked alms," cried the bushy-whiskers.

"It is false!" thundered Dick. "I have not discharged my revolver at all. I brand you a liar, sir!"

"*Valgame Dios!* Do I not know what my own eyes see? Ask these men, who saw it as well as I. *Carrambo!* but are you not going to take the assassin, cowards?"

"Back!" cried Dick. "I have not shot any one, but I will if you press me to it. This is a put-up business, and I warn you that I'm going to resist arrest. *Vamos!* Make way for us, there!"

"That's ther talk," agreed Pete, in English. "We'll fight before you shall be put in the jug, Dicky, boy. Ther ball has opened sooner than we looked fer. Make room for us there, you dirty rascals, or we'll drill leak-holes clear through ye! Out of they way!"

Pete and Dick sprung forward together.

"Stop!" ordered the officer. "I arrest you, *Americano!*"

"Arrest and be aanged to you!" roared Dick, now in a towering passion.

"Don't shoot ter hit," Pete admonished.

"Shoot to scare, first, ef ye have ter shoot."

"They ought to get it in the neck!"

The crowd fell back, all save the officer and the man of the heavy whiskers, who were determined.

Pete and Dick fired together, just over their heads, and the policeman fell back a little, but the man of the whiskers made a grab for Dick and caught him.

Dick could have killed him, but that would not do.

Thrusting his weapon away, he grappled with the man, and the next moment the short and heavy fellow was standing on his head, to the amazement of all.

The officer was calling for help, now, and the crowd was growing every moment.

Dick and Pete broke their way through, and darted away.

"After them!" roared he of the whiskers. "Don't let the assassin escape you! He has killed a man here!"

"Yes! Yes! After them!" echoed the crowd. "He has killed a poor, harmless beggar, and he deserves the worst we can do to him."

The short, thick man fired, but not to hit, for he dared not shoot low enough for that for fear of hitting some one else.

Dick and Pete ran hard for a narrow street, some distance off.

It was darker than the rest of the city, seemingly, and promised chance for escape.

The greatest coward can go in for a chase when the enemy is fleeing, and under the urging of the whiskered man the crowd surged forward.

"We aire in for et, Dicky," observed Pete, as they ran.

"It looks like it, Peter, sure enough," Dick agreed. "Who shot that fellow, think you?"

"That same short cuss in the whiskers, that's who, I kalkylate. Et was a put-up job on us, of course, jest as you said et was."

"And they are bound to get us, I'm afraid."

"Not ef we know et."

"But, we are strangers here, and we'll be sure to run into a trap."

"We'll fight to the death, if they corner us, that's all."

"I don't agree with you there, Peter."

"And why not?"

"It won't do for us to draw blood if we can help it. It might go hard with us and balk the carrying out of our mission."

"But, they'll hang ye ef they git ye, Dick."

"We must see to it that they don't do that. Lordy! hear them howl, will you though!"

"Like ary pack of consarned hyenas, as I'm born. But, let 'em howl, fer they haven't got us yet, and they won't, either, if we can help it, you bet!"

They were now in the narrow street, and here a slight shadow favored them.

The moonlight was on strong, however, that even here they had but slight protection.

It was one of the poorer streets of the old city, and descended at an angle in the direction of the ravines to the south. It seemed not unlike a mountain defile.

And it was apparently deserted, too. The people were out on the Plaza, no doubt, for some kind of a public demonstration was going on, as the Americans were aware, having heard the music.

On they ran, the street becoming deeper and narrower all the time, and at last a dead wall loomed up before them.

At the same moment the crowd poured into the other end of the street.

"Trapped!" cried Pete.

"Like a pair of rats!" echoed Dick.

"And if they get us we are gone up, sure enough."

"I am, and no mistake. They will swear my life away in spite of me."

"Then by the star bangled spanner they mustn't get ye, that is all there is of it!"

"Well, you say how we are to get out of here."

"Bu'st into a house."

This they tried, without waiting a moment, but it did not work. The houses were empty, and the doors all secured.

And the crowd was coming, was growing nearer each moment. Unless they could escape within the minute they would have to surrender.

The wall was at least twelve feet high.

On one side it was flush with the house, forming a sharp right angle.

This was not the same on the other side of the street, where the house was away from the wall about a foot and a half.

There was no escape that way, though, for the space was walled up, at a depth of two feet or so back, and only a neat hiding-place was presented to the eager men.

Dick sprung across and entered the angle.

"Follow if you can, Pete!" he called.

"Where are ye goin', pard?"

"Over the wall, if I can," and bracing himself in the narrow space, Dick began to hitch upward by sheer force of muscle.

"Darn me ef ye ain't goin' ter do et, Dicky!" cried Pete, joyfully. "Ef they give me a minute more, I'll try et, too, but et ain't likely I'll have time."

"Come on, and don't attempt to stand them off."

"Too late, Dicky; hyer they come!"

"Don't resist them, then."

"No use in et."

Dick worked away, hard and furious, and at last was able to grasp the top of the wall with his hands.

It was but the work of a moment, then, for him to draw himself up, and the next instant he disappeared from sight of his pard below.

Pete sprung out of the narrow place, and faced the crowd, now at hand.

"Stop!" he called in Spanish. "Don't commit suicide by running against our bullets!"

The crowd halted, naturally.

"What do you want?" one man called out.

"Do you surrender? If you don't, we will fire upon you."

"We want to parley a minute."

"Say on, then."

"If we surrender, will you treat us fair?"

"We will lock you up so that the mob can't harm you, if that's what you mean."

"Well, that will do, I suppose. We didn't kill that fellow, and all we ask is a fair hearing in the matter."

He was promised that, when he called out that they surrendered, but when the officers advanced to take them, they found only one man, and as Pete would not tell what had become of Dick, they were puzzled.

CHAPTER III.

PETE IN PRISON. DICK ON DECK.

THERE were now five or six policemen in the crowd.

Besides these, the crowd was made up of Mexicans of every degree, from high to low—from caballero and senor to peon.

It seemed strange to them that one of the Americans should have vanished so completely from their sight, when they were sure both had entered this blind street.

They could not understand it.

"Tell us where he is," they fiercely demanded.

"Can't do it," declared Pete; "don't know myself. He is simply gone."

They examined the walls. Was it possible that he could have climbed up and got over?

They decided not.

Still, they might have searched, to make sure, but just then a voice hailed them, as they thought, and their attention was drawn elsewhere.

"Hello, Pete!" the voice in question sung out. "Where are you, Pete? Pete in a fix and Dick gone to the devil! Hello, Pete! Hello, Pete! Hello, Pete! Where are you, Pete?"

This voice came from the housetops, further back along the street.

"There he is!" exclaimed they all.

"And he is defying us!"

"He mocks us!"

"Come!"

Two of the policemen had Pete, and the others dashed off to secure the companion of the prisoner.

Pete was laughing heartily, and in order to make perfect the accidental deception, he called out in Spanish:

"Why didn't you keep still, fool? Now they have you, sure!"

That settled it; they had him already, in their minds.

Back along the street they ran, dragging Pete with them, leaving Dick to escape if he could.

"What's the matter, Pete?" sung out Polly, further along on the housetops. "What is up? Tryin' to paint town red? Polly want booze!"

"There he is! There he is!"

"Yes! yes! That's he!"

"Come down with you!"

"Foul assassin!"

"Murderer!"

Pete was doubling up with laughter, for this mistake struck him as being unusually ridiculous.

"Keep your mouth shut, you fool!" he shouted, in Spanish, as before. "If you don't they will have you before you know it. Might as well let them have a string to your neck like they do a pig."

"Polly wants whisk! Polly wants booze!"

"You'll get lead, I kalkylate," in English.

The crowd was greatly excited, and were determined now to have the man.

Some shots had been fired in the direction of the roofs, just to scare, but Poll Parrot paid no attention to them.

She followed with the crowd rather than led them, keeping up an incessant chatter all the time, and the deluded natives thought they were being terribly abused and their anger increased.

"You ought to lynch the fool when you do get him," declared Pete, in the native tongue.

"Why, señor?"

"He is abusing you so, and hadn't sense enough to be still and escape when he had the chance. I wouldn't blame you a bit."

And then Pete laughed again.

So it was kept up till the end of the junction of the street was reached, the crowd growing more and more enraged all the time, and when they came out into the broader thoroughfare another crowd joined in.

There, on the top of the last house of the narrow street, plainly seen in the moonlight, was the parrot!

"Pete, where are you?" the feathered imp demanded.

"Right here, Poll; come down!" Pete responded.

And down Polly flew, to his shoulder.

"*Vulgame Dios! El papagayo!*"

"*Malhaya!*"

"*Cascaras!*"

"*Peste!*"

These and a hundred other choice oaths and imprecations were hotly spit out, and one of the policemen made the attempt to take the bird by the neck.

Polly threw herself back over Pete's shoulder, however, holding fast by her sharp claws, and gave the man's hand such a hot reception that he was glad to give it up.

"You said it was your comrade!" they turned upon Pete.

"I said nothing of the kind," Pete declared. "I knew it was the bird all the time."

"Then where is your companion? Where did he go to? *Carrambo!* but it will go hard with you if you don't tell us! What did you do with him?"

"If you think I have got him in my pocket, search me," retorted Pete, disgustedly. "Seems hard to make you fellows believe anything. He disappeared, and that was the last I saw of him."

"Well, come along, you; if we can't get both we have got one, anyhow."

"Yes, but the wrong one."

Some of the policemen and most of the crowd returned to make another search in the narrow street, while the remainder led Pete away to the city carcel, where he was turned over to the *carcelero*, or jailer, for safe keeping.

In the mean time what of Dick?

The moment he reached the top of the wall and looked over he saw that the wall inclosed a spacious garden.

It was planted and well kept, as the moonlight revealed, and had many trees and bushes of various kinds. In the center, facing probably another street, was a big mansion, or *morada*.

Since Pete could not escape, and it would be folly for both to be caught, Dick did not hesitate but dropped over into the inclosure.

No sooner down than two men seized him.

Here was a surprise for the American and a struggle commenced that called forth all his muscular powers.

Not a word was spoken, and as the two fellows dragged him in the direction of the house they were soon away from the wall and under the shade of some trees.

The two Mexicans were powerful fellows, both of them, and Dick thought they must overcome him, in spite of his efforts.

They made not a sound, save their heavy breathing, and he did not speak.

When Dick thought it was all up with him, one man slipped, and this gave Dick a slight advantage.

He was quick to seize it, too, and threw that fellow off before he could recover and closed desperately with the other, succeeding in downing him and tearing away from his hold.

At that instant the other was upon him

again, but a blow between the eyes from Dick's fist dropped him like a log.

The other was up and coming, by that time

Dick offered him a dose of the same medicine, but the fellow dodged and closed in with him again.

Then commenced another struggle for the mastery, and still no word was spoken and no sound made louder than the struggle itself. Dick wondered at it as he fought.

The second man scrambled to his feet before Dick could clear himself this time, and he had them both to fight again.

In a moment however, he got a favorable advantage.

A chance offered for him to strike the two fellows' heads together, and he did it, with no gentle force, and down they dropped as though they had been struck by lightning.

"Well, this is warm work," Dick panted, as he shook himself together. "I'll be hanged if Mexico isn't giving us a warm, from the word Go. Wonder where it will all end, anyhow? Must get out of here and see what I can do for Pete, next thing on the programme."

His clothing had been somewhat disarranged, but he quickly restored it, and finding his hat, moved toward the house, leaving the two men where he had dropped them under the trees.

"Something peculiar about all this," he mused. "Those fellows said never a word the whole time we were at it. Maybe they were to rob and had good reason to keep quiet. Maybe I had better rouse up the household and have them taken care of. But, we'll see about that."

Keeping under the shade of the trees as much as possible, he drew near to the house cautiously, approaching it on the shaded side.

It was a quaint-looking building, a cross between a hotel and a prison, as Dick thought.

The rear was plain, with small square windows, and only one door.

This door was low down, and some steps led down to its level, and, as Dick discovered on drawing near, the windows were barred.

He passed around, slowly, and found that the end was like the back. What was more, a high fence cut off his escape in that direction, and the fence was of iron with pointed tops.

At the other end he had noticed what seemed to be the kitchen, work-room, and so forth, and from there escape to the street seemed easy, though he would have to cross the yard in the strong moonlight. No matter, he must take the risk and get out while he could.

He crept along under the line of the windows, keeping close to the house, and was nearing the other end when something caused him to stop.

He had caught the sound of sobbing, and stopped to listen.

It came from the window.

Standing erect, he cautiously brought his face to the window and tried to peer in, but all was darkness beyond, yet he heard the sobbing plainly now.

It was evidently a woman, weeping, and she did not appear to be more than a foot away from the barred window. Dick hesitated, thinking what to do in the matter, and while he stood thus the unseen person moaned.

"My God! I cannot bear it! Why have they put me here? What have I done that they should treat me so? Oh! father! if you could only know where I am, how quickly you would come to me! But, you cannot know, you think I am safe and happy, and it may be months before you will come to see me again—My God! I cannot, I cannot bear it! Oh! what shall I do?"

Dick drew back out of sight, but tapped upon the bars with his ring.

He drew away his hand quickly, and the moaning and sobbing had ceased instantly at the first sound.

Dick waited, for he did not want to alarm the person and cause her to cry out nor frighten her and scare her away from the window. For a few seconds not a sound was heard.

Then a woman's voice whispered:

"Who is there?"

"A friend," Dick responded.

"Thank God! Let me see you."

Dick stepped to the window, and dimly saw a face within.

"Who are you, sir?" the young woman asked—he judged her to be young, near as he could guess.

"I am an American," Dick made response. "I came in here by chance, and hearing you weeping, I stopped to listen. Do you speak English?"

"Si, señor."

"But, you still use Spanish."

"I am so used to it, that is the only reason, sir."

This was in English with scarcely any foreign accent whatever, in a sweet and musical voice.

"Well, let us whisper in this language, for fear of being overheard. Do I understand that you are a prisoner here? Who are you, and what is the reason you are in this place?"

"Yes, yes, I am a prisoner, and this is a madhouse. They say I am crazy, but I am as sane as you are. I know not what it means, for I have harmed no one, and it is all a mystery to me. If you will listen, sir, I will tell you all about it."

"Proceed; I listen."

CHAPTER IV.

DICK IN TROUBLE. RESCUE. THE CAPTURE.

THE girl put her face close to the bars, so that Dick felt her warm breath on his face and neck as she spoke.

"My name is Inez Damasco," she began, and at mention of the name Dick gave a start. It was not the first time he had heard that name; in fact—But, no matter here and now.

"My father's name is Hunfredo Damasco, and at present he is in the United States, where he has a rich mine. I have not heard from him in a long, long time, and I was preparing to go and find him when I was seized and imprisoned here."

"And who did it?"

"I do not know; the authorities placed me here."

"But, there must have been some one behind it all. Do you think your cousin had a hand in it?"

"My cousin?"

"Yes; Diego Soslayo."

"Heavens! who are you, to know him?"

"I do not know him."

"You know his name, and that he is my cousin?"

"Yes, I know it now; I wanted to make sure you are the person you claim to be, that is all."

"More mystery still, sir. You almost frighten me. How did you know me, or him? Did you come here from my father? Ha! maybe you know my father! Tell me quickly, if you do, I beg."

"I never saw your father in my life, Miss Damasco."

"You puzzle me."

"But, your story, miss. It cannot be that is all you have to tell, is it?"

"I half fear I have told you too much already, sir. What assurance can you give me that you are my friend?"

"My word."

"It is not enough. I have enemies, and

you may be one of the number in disguise, for all I can tell. Your finding me here leads me to suspect you now, sir."

"I am sorry for that. If you have anything to tell me, you had better tell me quickly, for I must get away from here before I am seen. I got in here by accident, had a fight with a couple of men, who almost made me their prisoner. If you will trust me, do so."

"They must have been the watchmen."

"Are your watchmen here deaf and dumb?"

"By no means, sir."

"These fellows appeared to be."

"Then you did not come here to find me?"

"Assuredly not; had no idea you were here. Was seeking my way out when I heard your sobbing, and stopped to hearken. You know what followed. If you remember what you were saying to yourself, that will give you a cue, perhaps, to what I know."

Dick had a reason for keeping her in ignorance of a certain fact, and took this means of doing it, and the scheme worked.

If she had been speaking to herself before he came along, she could not know how much he had overheard.

"How stupid of me!" she cried. "Now I understand how you came to know so much about me. You have overheard me talking to myself, of course. Well, it is true, and I cannot help it."

"What is true?"

"What you heard me saying."

Dick was at fault here; he had not heard it.

Knowing nothing, he said nothing, and it was just as well, for the girl added in a moment:

"I cannot help suspecting him, really. I have never liked him, and believe him capable of doing almost any despicable act or meanness, sir. No need to name him; you know whom I mean, of course."

"Certainly."

Dick could not show how weak his hand was.

He supposed she meant the mentioned cousin, Diego Soslayo. And he, by the way, was the foe Pete Parrot had named.

"And you say you are my friend?"

"Yes."

"Then there is one thing I have to ask of you, sir."

"Name it."

"That you will help me to get out of this place and to start upon my journey northward."

"I will do it, Miss Damasco."

"When?"

"Just as soon as I can get my friend and pard out of a difficulty he has gotten himself into. We will come here and have you out if we have to tear down the whole house to do it."

"You talk large, as the saying is."

"No larger than I mean, as you will find. Be patient and wait for us."

"I will. What is your name?"

"Mose Mantell. Here, however, I am calling myself Marcos Parroco."

"I will not forget the name, sir. You cannot forget mine, I know. Now, go, before you are discovered."

"Yes, I will go now. Keep up your courage, and be ready to leave here at a moment's notice, any time. Just as soon as possible—*Uk-k-k!*"

At that second something encircled Deadwood Dick's neck, and he was cut short in what he was saying and jerked backward upon the ground with terrible force almost rendering him insensible.

He could not utter a sound.

The girl gave voice to just a little scream, but instantly was silent, afraid to awaken or arouse the inmates of the house.

No sooner was Dick down than two men

threw themselves upon him and, although he tried to get at his weapons they were too quick for him and he was speedily bound and gagged.

Not a word had been spoken.

Dick had recognized them as the same two with whom he had struggled so short a time before.

As soon as they had secured them to their satisfaction one of him gave him a hard kick, muttering something in Spanish under his breath, and they dragged him under the shade of some bushes and there left him.

That done they stepped to the barred window.

"*Ce! Chiton!*" one whispered. "We are friends to your rescue, Dona Inez. We have silenced that dog of a traitor."

"Who are you?" the frightened girl asked. "He was my friend, and you have done him harm. I demand that you release him at once, or I will—"

"*Silencio!*" she was interrupted. "He is a dog of a traitor, not your friend at all, but the friend of your foes. We have been watching him, lady, and know what we are saying."

"Then who are you?"

"Friends of Gaspar Montero."

"Then he has returned? Thank God!"

"Yes; and we are here from him, Dona Inez."

"*Salve!* But, you cannot get me out of here, my friends."

"We will attend to that. You remain silent and trust us. But the guards?"

"They come around the house every hour, senors. It must be near time for them now."

"Then we will retire until they have come and gone again, when we will come to your rescue and have you out and away."

"*Ce! they come!*"

The girl's quick ears had caught a sound, and the two men sprung away from the window and hid behind some trees and bushes not far away, where they waited.

In a few moments two men appeared around the end of the house, wearing clanking swords and smoking cigarettes to their hearts' content, and came along down by the row of windows, talking.

Deadwood Dick had been able to see all that had taken place, but not to hear what was said.

He had come to the conclusion that his two foes had no more business here in this garden than he had himself, else why should they hide?

He was tempted to moan, or throw himself around in the bushes, to draw the attention of the guards as they passed, but quickly decided that it would perhaps be better not to do so.

In the first place he would be the one captured, while the others would stand a fair chance for getting away. If he remained silent, and the two were friends of the young woman, she would surely tell them of their mistake and he would be freed.

Whether right or wrong, he allowed the opportunity to pass, and remained silent.

When the guardsmen had disappeared, the two men in hiding came forth.

They ran quickly to the window, where they began to work in a lively and determined, yet silent, manner.

Dick could not see just what they were about, but he guessed that they were trying to remove the iron bars, and he was right in his supposition.

One was armed with a small ribbon-saw of tempered steel, drawn to a tight tension in a steel frame, and he was sawing away at one of the bars, at the top, while the other was holding it tight.

This last was to deaden any sound that might be made.

Dick could barely hear the saw at its work, for being so fine it did not make much noise.

In about seven or ten minutes one of the

bars was cut off at the top, and was bent outward and downward out of the way. Then another was cut in the same manner and similarly disposed of.

There was now a space sufficiently large for the young woman to get out.

Deadwood Dick had not been idle, meantime, be it understood. He had been tugging manfully at his bonds, in the hope of releasing himself.

But, tug as he would, he could not loosen them, and had to give it up. That he had been bound only too well he had to admit to himself. There was little chance of his escaping unaided.

When the second bar had been bent down, one of the men whispered:

"Now, Dona Inez, we are ready for you."

"And I am ready."

The young woman put her arms out through the window, then her head, and the two men caught hold of her and she was quickly drawn through.

"She must recognize them as friends," Deadwood Dick thought. "Otherwise she would not accept their aid. Now, will she remember me?"

As soon as the man had placed the girl's feet upon the ground they hurriedly led her away, and as their direction took them past the spot where Dick was lying on the ground, he groaned.

"Ha! it is he!" the girl exclaimed.

"Yes, but we must haste, Dona. We cannot stop now, lest we be caught."

"I must see him, to tell him how I despise him," rejoined the girl, firmly, and she pushed into the bushes.

"Ha! dog!" she cried vengefully, in low voice. "You came to me with lies on your lips, from my foes, did you? Lie there, and may you rot before you are found. I despise you!"

She stamped her foot on the ground as she said this, and turned away immediately, trusting herself to the two men who had rescued her out of her prison cell.

"She is being fooled," thought Dick, "and I, gagged as I am, am unable to warn her. But, she would not believe me anyhow. Such is the mind of woman; it goes with the wind, whichever way it blows."

They passed on and out of sight, in the direction of the northern corner of the garden—Dick could tell this by the stars.

And Deadwood Dick, he was left there bound and gagged.

His only hope, now, was the reappearance of the guardsmen, and he was sorry he had not drawn their attention before.

Still, maybe it was better so, or would be in the long run; who could say as to that? To have warned them against the two men would have been to lessen his own chances of rescuing the girl later on.

Be that as it might, the die was cast.

It seemed an age before they appeared again, but finally he heard their clanking swords and caught the flash of their cigarettes around the corner of the building.

They came on, side by side, the same as before, talking, and nothing disturbed them till they came to the window from which the escape had been effected, where they stopped short with ejaculations.

"*Carrambo!*" cried one.

"*Valgame Dios!*" the other.

"One of the doves has broken her *palomar!*"

"Impossible! She has had help from without. Look at this!"

He indicated the ends of the bars, where they had been so neatly cut with the fine saw.

"*Inferno!* Now we are in for trouble, true as we are born men. Who can it have been? Which way have they taken her? Quick! let us explore around!"

Deadwood Dick gave a loud groan.

Instantly the two straightened up, their swords in hand.

Dick repeated the sound, and they caught the direction whence it came and advanced toward him.

When they came to the bushes the sound was repeated yet again, and parting the bushes, there they discovered a prisoner bound and gagged, evidently a Mexican.

Followed then some more choice Spanish expletives.

"Who are you?" one demanded.

"Fool!" the other. "Don't you see he is gagged?—*la boca tapada con mordaza!*"

The first speaker stooped, and with the point of his sword cut the gag away, but did not release the prisoner's hands or feet.

"Well, then, answer now," he ordered.

"I am a Mexican," Dick answered. "I am Marcos Parroco."

"You lie!" the guard exclaimed, savagely. "You are an Americano. You do not know the Spanish tongue. Confess, or here and now you die!"

And the fellow pressed his sword against Dick's breast.

CHAPTER V.

HARD TO CATCH. A BIG SURPRISE.

DEADWOOD DICK'S knowledge of Spanish, at this time, was too limited for him to pass for a Mexican.

This he had known before, but hoped that he might pull through, by saying little, clad as he was in Mexican dress, but it was of no use.

"Well, then, have it your own way," he said, in plain English.

This puzzled his captors, who could not understand a word he said, and so he gained that one point of knowledge respecting them. They would have to take his Spanish for what it was worth.

"What do you say?" one demanded.

"I say you are a gentleman," Dick made answer. "What are you going to do with me?"

"We are going to lock you up, of course."

"I can tell you all about the escape of the young woman, and where she was taken."

"Ha! that is good. Tell us all you can, quickly."

"But it will be on condition."

"Peste!"

"You free my hands and feet and say you will let me go, and I will tell you all about it. What do you say to that?"

"*Carrambo!* do you take us for fools?"

"Oh, no."

"For what then?"

"Cowards."

"*Cascarus!* but you had better take care!"

"You are two against one, and both armed, and you are afraid to untie my hands and feet."

With a slash with his sword one of the men instantly cut the cords that held Dick's feet, and ordered him to get up, in which the other helped him.

"Now my hands," Dick invited, holding them out.

But there, they hesitated, wisely.

"What is the use? We should only have the trouble of binding you again. We demand that you tell us what you know."

"I know nothing with my hands tied."

They glared at him, then looked at each other, as if debating what was to be done under the circumstances. Surely, they were capable of holding him, even with his hands free.

But one shook his head in the negative.

"To the guard-house with him," he cried, savagely.

"And meantime let your prisoner escape, eh?" said Dick. "You may recapture her, if you are quick."

"Tell us which way she was taken."

"Will you free me if I do?"

"Yes, we swear it."

"Enough. There were two men, and they took the girl in that direction."

And Dick pointed correctly. He had an object in this, as we can believe. He knew there must be means of escape there, and hoped to escape that way himself.

"Quick, then, and let us see," cried one of the men. "Come, you with us, my man," to Dick.

One of the men ran ahead, while the other, with a hand on Dick's arm followed.

They ran to the corner of the garden, where, by the moonlight, a ladder was seen leaning against the wall, showing how the escape had been made.

There was some beautiful Spanish swearing, then, the guardsmen trying to vie with each other in the choice of oaths, seemingly, and for the moment they let go of Dick, carelessly.

Seeing his chance, Dick made a run for the ladder.

It rested upon the wall at a gentle incline, and he thought he could run up it before he could be caught, and his intention was to leap to the ground on the other side, no matter if his hands were bound. Later on he would find a way of freeing them, he thought.

So, he made the attempt.

Swift of foot, he reached the ladder almost before the two men realized what his intention was, and started up it.

Then, however, they were after him with a rush and a howl, and just as he was nearing the top, the top of the wall, they reached the foot of the ladder and one gave it a jerk.

Dick tried to save himself, but it was no use. He staggered, and then over he toppled and came down with a thump and a bump.

"Curse you! that was your trick, was it!"

"You couldn't expect me to stay here if I could get away, could you?"

"You were one of the party yourself, Satan burn you! That's how you knew the ladder was here."

"Oh, no, you mistake; my friends would never have left me bound."

"Well, we don't know; come with us."

Each took an arm, and Dick was led back again in the direction of the house, a prisoner.

But, there was something in his favor, now, and he meant to make the most of it. His fall had strained the cords that bound his wrists.

His hands had been tied behind him, in the usual way, and the cords had got fast on a projecting end of one of the rungs of the ladder as he fell, and it had come loose.

Working his hands gently, by the time they reached the place where he was to be imprisoned Dick had his hands free.

One man let go, saying he would go to the house and arouse the *gobernador*.

No sooner the words, than Dick's fist took him under the ear.

Over he went, like a nine-pin hard struck.

With the same movement Dick broke away from the other, and leaping to where the first had dropped, picked up his sword.

Taking then another leap, he turned and faced guardsman number two, and put up his arm in a way that warned the fellow that he probably knew something about the manly exercise.

"Help! Help!" that worthy bawled lustily. "Surrender, dog, or I will cut off your head!"

"Cut away," cried Dick. "Look out for your own at the same time, though."

They came together, with that, and their swords clashed.

Click! clack! swish! click! clack!

It might have been a splendid sight, to an observer, had it not been so desperately in earnest.

Dick could have settled his antagonist at once, had he cared to use his revol-

ver, but that would not do. He had no desire to dabble in blood, if it was to be avoided.

One charge of that kind was enough, even though a false one.

But he would have to do something, quick.

The fellow's cries for help had not ceased, and lights and voices were seen and heard in the direction of the house.

"Run!" cried Dick. "If you don't I'll have to settle you! You are no match for me, and you ought to know it by this time. Run, I tell you, or I'll have to run you through!"

The fact of the business was, Dick found he had met his match.

His words were only a cool bluff.

Nevertheless, they had the desired effect, for the man could not know but he was speaking the truth, and he began to give ground.

Dick pressed him hard, now, as he had to do, for the other fellow was getting up, and he was adding his voice to the cry for help, and men were running from the house.

The foot of Dick's antagonist slipped.

Dick took advantage of the accident instantly and dealt the fellow a heavy blow on the head with the back of his sword.

Down he went, all in a heap, but the other was there to take his place in the same instant, now armed with a heavy club that was longer than the sword Dick had in hand.

Cluck! plunk! the different weapons met, and seeing his chance Dick closed in and struck the man's fingers.

He dropped the club instantly with a howl of pain.

Dick grabbed him by the back of the neck, prodding the point of his sword in his back, and commanded:

"Show me the way out, instantly, or I'll ram this clear through you!"

The fellow wilted, instantly, even with help so near at hand.

"The gate," he said, "Key in my belt."

Dick saw something dangling over the fellow's sash, something that looked like a tin check, and he grabbed it.

It proved to be a check with a chain attached, at the end of which was a big key, and armed with this Dick ran for the gate, with now four or five men almost at his heels.

He reached the gate, but the others were not more than a dozen strides behind him, and he had no more than gotten the key into the lock when he had to turn and defend himself against them all. It was now more dangerous than it had been before. He did not give up, however.

Dropping the sword, he whipped out a brace of five-shooters.

"Back!" he ordered. "It will be lead instead of steel if you don't!"

This had the effect to bring them to a stop, and they glared at him wildly.

"He's the murderer," said one.

"And how came he here? Surrender, dog!"

"At him!"

This order was given by one who was evidently the head of the institution, but it was not promptly obeyed.

The weapons in Dick's hands had a decidedly dangerous look.

"Don't rush this matter," Dick said, calmly.

"Who and what are you?"

"An innocent man!"

"How came you here?"

"By scaling the wall, sir."

"Honest men do not scale walls."

"I did it to escape a mob at my heels."

"Ha! then you are the murderer, are you? Men, take him!"

"No, I am not the murderer, though I am the man falsely accused of the deed."

"That is your version of it. We cannot

swear to that. I think we'll keep you, now that we have got you."

"But, you have not got me yet. What is more, you will not take me without some one getting hurt. Get back from here, now, every man of you!"

Dick spoke in the plainest Spanish he could command, and what that lacked in force was made up by his menacing manner and the grim and dangerous revolvers he aimed at the men.

They fell back involuntarily.

"Further back!" Dick thundered. "If you don't, I'll lay you out."

They recoiled from before him, and Dick put away one weapon and with his left hand turned the key in the gate.

He unlocked the lock, withdrew the key, and still with his eyes on the men in front of him he swung the gate open a little and passed through, closed the gate and locked it one the outside.

The half dozen of baffled officials and guardsmen were gnashing their teeth in impotent rage.

"Don't let him get away!" cried one of the two guardsmen.

"He has broken open the house and stolen one of the patients!" the other informed.

"What! What's that?"

This was the governor of the institution, and he jumped clear from the ground in his excitement.

"It is true," he was assured. "One of the windows has been forced, the bars being cut, and a young woman has been stolen away—"

The governor gave vent to a terrific oath, and ordered his men to attack the gate, and just at that moment Dick going away, they obeyed as if they were the bravest of the brave.

Dick had escaped, true, but it was only out of the frying-pan into the fire, as the saying has it.

The shouting had drawn the attention of the police, and three of them were running in the direction of the asylum gate.

Besides these, idlers were beginning to collect, and it looked as though Dick would have his work to do over again. He was not yet out of the woods.

"What's the matter?" a policeman demanded.

"A fight," Dick answered, in good enough Spanish.

He was not running, and he might have escaped then, had not the governor of the place bellowed out:

"Stop that man! Stop that man! He is the murderer! He has broken into the *asilo*! He is a murderer! a thief! a rascal! a vagabond! a wretch!"

This turned all attention to Dick, and escape looked impossible. He had just passed the officers, and now they turned and commanded him to stop and give himself up to them.

"He don't mean me," Dick protested.

"We don't know that; you are the man we mean, anyhow."

Dick cast about him to decide quickly what he should do, in such a fix.

This asylum was on the outer edge of the city, and its walls separated it from the city, to a certain extent.

A street ran in front of it, but here the houses were not many, and a little way beyond lay the hills with their gullies and ravines.

Dick resolved to run for it.

Firing his revolvers, a couple of shots from each, to check pursuit for a moment, he turned and was off like a deer.

Across the street, around a dark and seemingly vacant house, then down along a ragged looking fence, behind another house, and before him lay a house with the door wide open.

He looked back, and his pursuers were not

yet in sight around the last turn he had made, so he ran straight for the open door, sprung in, and closed the door after him. There was instantly a woman's scream, and a pair of soft arms were flung around his neck and lips greeted his in kisses.

CHAPTER VI.

DEADWOOD DICK IN A DELICATE DILEMMA.

DEADWOOD DICK had never been more surprised in his life.

The room was totally dark, and he could not see who this woman was—that is, what she was like.

Her arms were soft and warm, however, and he felt her heaving breast pressed close, while her sweet breath fanned his face in a way that thrilled him.

"My love! my love!"

So she exclaimed, in broken English.

"Dick," she added, more to his surprise than ever, "Dick, *alma mai*, what is the matter?"

Dick returned her embrace, resolved to enjoy the adventure and her mistake to the full, while the opportunity lasted.

But, then, was it a mistake? She had spoken his name!

There was no time to question, for he expected to hear the steps of his pursuers the next moment, so he hurriedly whispered, speaking in English, since she had done so:

"I am pursued! You must save me! You will hear them in a moment; they will demand to know if you have seen me; you will tell them *no*. Do you understand?"

"Yes, yes; I will die for you if necessary, Dick, my love!"

Angry voices were heard at that moment.

Then came the stampede of many feet, and soon a heavy knock at the door.

No answer was given at first, and the knocking was repeated, when the young woman called out to know who was there.

"Officers of the law," was the answer.

"Ave Maria! what do you want here, officers?" in affright.

"Open this door immediately."

"Oh! I cannot do that; I am in undress. Pray tell me what it is you want."

This was a clever lie, on the part of the girl, and it had the desired effect at once, for the man was heard to say:

"He can't be here, that's sure."

"No; try the next house; he is somewhere, for he surely hadn't time to reach the *campo*."

"Ask the woman if she heard any one running."

All this was plainly heard, but the man at the door raised his voice to make the inquiry.

"No," was the young woman's answer. "I have been asleep, and you awakened me by your pounding. There is no one here, I assure you. Do go away, please."

The men went off mumbling and growling, and were soon heard pounding at the door of another house further on where they undoubtedly put similar questions and of course met with the same disappointment.

Meantime the girl had thrown her arm around Dick's neck again, and tremblingly asked:

"Oh! Dick! what have you done, that the officers are after you?"

Her broken English was sweetest music.

"I have done nothing, my love," Dick boldly answered, pressing her close. "A murder has been committed, and they have mistaken me for the murderer. I had to run to escape arrest."

"And you thought of me and came straight here. How fortunate that we had appointed our meeting here for this hour! But, it is terrible, to think of your being accused of murder. Who has been killed? and why do they accuse you?"

Dick responded in hoarse whisper.

"It was only a beggar," he answered,

"and I happened to be nearest to him when he was shot down. Somebody raised the cry that I had done it. I suppose I will have to lie low, or put on a disguise to get away in. You will help me in the latter, of course."

"I will help you in anything, Dick. Would I meet you here alone in grandmother's old house, did I not love you?"

For answer, Dick pressed her fondly again. He must carry on the deception for a little time, until the officers had given up their search.

There was danger from another direction, however. If the young woman had an appointment with her lover, whom she took Dick to be, he might put in his appearance at any moment.

"Where is your grandmother?" he whispered.

"She has gone to the *fiestas* over on the Plaza, as you very well know. But, let us sit down, Dick, for the danger is past now."

She felt around for a chair, and having found it, called to Dick, who went where she stood.

He found that the chair was a large one, evidently the favorite seat of the absent grandmother, and dropping upon it he drew the young woman to his lap.

It was a deception he felt that he must play, and if he *had* to do it he might as well play it to the full.

Kisses were exchanged and she said:

"And you will save me?"

"If it is in my power to do so. I have got myself in this confounded scrape for the present, you see."

"Yes, but the murderer will be found, and then you will be safe. I have been pleading with my brother, but it is of no use; he is determined I shall wed Diego Soslayo."

Dick gave an inward start.

"The rascal!" he cried. "He is not very brotherly to you, I must say, but he shall *not* come between us. Now, tell me the whole scheme. Tell me everything about it."

Dick had to be watchful, and could not go very far.

He did not even know this girl's name!

"Why Diego Soslayo is trying to cheat his cousin, Inez Damasco, out of her inheritance, and Fernando is aiding him. If I will marry Diego, my brother will get a share, you see. And I am to pass myself for Inez! Oh! I hate them for it, how I hate them for it!"

"And have you promised?"

"They have *made* me promise. They threatened to kill me if I would not."

"So there is no hope, but for you to fly with me, and for us to marry at once and so cheat their little game."

"That is it, Dick, that is it, and I have a plan which is this: I will disguise as a boy and you can take me with you on your engine up into the United States, and we need never come back here any more. You can get work there as well as here."

Which revealed that the real lover must be an engineer in the employ of the Mexican National Railway.

What was his name? How could Dick find out.

"Then you are ready to change your name, are you?" he whispered, laughing. "Won't it sound strange at first?"

"Do you think so? Luella Radway? Why, I think it will be much prettier than Luella Remolon. My brother almost makes me hate the family name, after such conduct."

Now Dick had it all!

The brother was Fernando Remolon, and he and Diego Soslayo were the men Dick and Pete had been warned against.

And a pretty scheme they had set in motion, or were trying to get under headway; a very pretty scheme indeed! And it was, let us say, this very business which had brought Dick hither!

A step was heard without, and there came a light rapping on the door.

The girl was out of Dick's arms like a flash.

"Who are you?" she cried, desperately.

"It is I, Dick Radway," a manly voice responded.

Deadwood Dick was in a situation now, true enough! And how was he going to get out of it?

The girl now screamed wildly, and ran toward the door, but fell over a chair in her haste, and lay on the floor screaming hysterically, while the man at the door demanded:

"What is the matter? Open the door, Luella."

Dick strode to the door, laying his hand on the bar that held it tight closed.

"Listen!" he commanded. "There has been a mistake here, and I owe you an apology and an explanation, sir, before I open this door."

"Who are you?" was the fierce demand.

"What are you doing here?"

"He is a knave and a wretch, dear Dick!" cried the girl. "He cheated me, in pretending he was you."

"Open this door instantly, or I'll break it in!" the man on the outside demanded. "Open it! or by the living Jehu I'll drive a bullet through at you, whoever you are!"

"Two can play at that game, so don't try it on," warned Dick Bristol. "I want to explain, so there need be no fighting when we face each other, sir. I tell you there has been a mistake, and I am willing to explain all about it. Luella Remolon, hold your tongue for one moment!"

"I have had explanation enough!" thundered Dick Radway. "If you don't open this door in one second I'll break it in!"

"Well, then, break and be hanged to you!"

Dick was disgusted, finding he would be given no chance to clear himself, and left the door instantly and groped his way through the room to the rear.

He knew there ought to be another door, and was not long in finding it, and he passed out that way just as the girl opened the front door to admit her engaged lover, who came in like a tiger.

"Where is he?" he cried.

"He is gone; went out that way, Dick."

He sprang to the rear door, but, Dick had fastened it on the other side.

"Who was he? What was he doing here? What does this mean, Luella? Are you, then, false to me after all?"

"Hearken!" thundered Deadwood Dick, speaking from the other side of the closed door. "That lady is innocent, sir, of any deception to you. The blame is all mine; I had to deceive her to save my life."

There was the report of a pistol, and a bullet crashed through the door only a little distance from Dick Bristol's head.

This was followed by another, and still another, in quick succession.

Deadwood Dick thought it time to get out. Noise like this was likely to bring the police back again, and it would not do to be found there.

In this small rear, or interior room, where he now was, he felt some female garments hanging, and hastily seized some of them to don for a disguise, and that done he passed out to find himself in a diminutive court, surrounded by walls.

This did not deter him long, however.

By the moonlight he saw a barrel near one wall, then a box, and not very high up was a window. To put the box on the barrel and leap up was the work of a moment.

From this perch he could grasp the window, to which he drew himself, and from there to the roof not a great effort was required. Then, without hesitation, he swung himself over the parapet and dropped upon the outside.

Gathering up the garments he had stolen, he ran in the direction of the open *campos*—the fields, not far distant.

"If there won't be a lively lovers' quarrel I miss my guess," he said to himself. "It was too bad, but, what could I do? Had I acted any differently she would have suspected and I would have been lost."

He had to laugh over the misadventure, too.

"But, he must believe me, and her, unless he is a blockhead," he came to the conclusion. "Not likely she would appoint a meeting with him, and entertain another lover at the same time and place! Oh, no; women don't manage things that way!"

Finally he came to a deserted spot, where trees and bushes afforded concealment, and there he stopped to don his new raiment.

He found he had taken a petticoat and an ample shawl, and they were evidently the every-day garments of the absent *abuela*—grandmother.

"No matter," he decided, "they will answer the purpose. I'll put them on and hie me to the Plaza and join in the *fiestas*. And then I must get Pete out of limbo, by hook or crook."

He stepped into the petticoat and secured it about his waist, and taking his hat under his arm, put the shawl over his head and drew it around his face, covering all but his eyes with its folds.

That done, he set out to retrace his steps the way he had come, unable to resist the temptation to pass the house to learn how the lovers were making it.

When he came near he heard them in earnest and rapid conversation, and they had now a light within.

"I guess they will make up all right," he said to himself, as he passed on; and guided by the towers of the cathedral, in plain sight in the moonlight he bent his steps in the direction of the great Plaza.

CHAPTER VII.

A STRANGE FREAK OF FORTUNE.

THERE was, on this night, some reason for a public rejoicing, and the Mexicans were enjoying it to the full.

The Plaza before the cathedral and national palace was aglow with lights, albeit the moon was so radiant, and there the people were holding high revel to the occasion.

There was music, and the people were dancing, promenading, and enjoying themselves in various ways.

Dick arrived upon the scene to find that he was only one among a thousand women of similar appearance, and no attention whatever was paid to him.

That he was old his gait attested, and that he was ugly was taken for granted from the fact that he kept his face covered. He simply idled about, looking on, and nothing more.

He was thinking, trying to decide how to make his next move.

What he desired to do first was to rescue Pete Parrot, but how was that to be accomplished?

While he was thus cogitating, he heard a name mentioned close by him that claimed his attention instantly, and he looked at the speaker.

The name spoken was Soslajo!

The speaker was a young man, good-looking, plainly a Mexican.

At the call another man in the throng stopped and looked around, and the two immediately joined each other.

The one who had called seemed to be in a hurry and in an excited state of mind, and he drew the other aside out of the passing crowd, at the same time asking:

"Have you heard?"

"Heard what?"

"The escape."

"Yes, one got away, I know. It is strange the police could not find him."

"No, no; I don't mean that at all; I mean the escape from the asylum. The very devil has been to pay over there."

Dick had drawn near enough to hear all, and no one thought of noticing such a poor creature as he appeared to be. He was simply some old crone, taking perhaps her last view of the *fiestas*.

"What do you mean, Fernando?" was demanded.

"Just what I say, Diego Soslajo. The girl has given us the slip."

"Furies! you don't mean it! How did it occur?"

"She had help. Two men cut the bars of her window, and she is gone. I hear they are scouring the city for trace of her."

"And who were the two men?"

"Who knows? But, there is more to the story: The escaped murderer was in the grounds at the same time, and he fought his way out afterward and made good his escape. He is the devil."

"I pity he wasn't shot instead of the beggar."

"Who would have thought of his escaping?"

"No one; but he did. Andro did his part well, but it did not work."

"But, what is to be done? This upsets all our plans, and leaves us in the lurch, badly."

"Nothing can be done, but to aid the police all we can and so get the girl retaken and have the murderer arrested. That must be done, no matter what the cost is to us."

Dick stood as silent as a mummy, wrapped in his shawl, and he looked not unlike one, too.

"How is your sister taking to the new scheme?" Soslajo asked.

"She don't take to it at all. She kicks over the traces, and is going to give us trouble."

"I suppose that American is in the way."

"Exactly."

"I'll have to have him attended to. He can be fixed so that Mexico won't see his shadow on her soil again. I can have it done."

"And then I believe Luella would take her own life if she knew of it. There seems no hope there, for she declares if she must marry you she will not play the part, and there it is."

"Confound the woman! Fernando, she must wed me! I love her, and she must be mine. Do you understand what I'm saying?"

"And how can we make her do it?"

"By force."

"Well, it will come to that, so we may as well take that plan at once. But, it must be sprung upon her suddenly, without giving her a chance to defeat us at our own game."

"The sooner the better to suit me."

"But, now with the other escaped, there will be the deuce to pay."

"I tell you she must be retaken, somehow. That is the only way out of the woods."

"But, who helped her out of there? that is the question. When they said two men had rescued her, I was knocked silly. Who can they have been?"

Diego was thoughtful.

"I don't know," he had to confess.

"It certainly was not Gaspar Montero," said Remolon.

"No, unless he has escaped the snare we set for him. He is a prisoner."

"And if not he, then who?"

"Who, indeed?"

"Both were silent now, and Dick, eying them sharply out of the folds of the shawl or *serape* he had around his head, noticed a young woman standing near them.

She seemed to be interested in what they had to say.

Presently she stepped forward.]

"Diego Soslayo, do you know me?" she asked, throwing back her spangled shawl from her head and face.

"Teresa!" the man addressed exclaimed.

"Yes, Teresa Papada! If you want to see me, you know where I live."

With that she turned away, leaving both men staring after her in a species of blank amazement.

"What the deuce does she mean?" Diego questioned.

"Who and what is she?"

"A girl I used to wait upon. She loves me madly."

"Ha! is that the case? Do you think she can have had anything to do with the escape?"

"She?" disdainfully. "Oh, no; she could not plan anything so deep as that, even if she could think far enough to get such an idea."

"I don't know about that, if she really loves you and is jealous of you, or of Luella, or— But, hang it, of whom can she be jealous?"

"Of everybody and no one. She is harmless, and in such a complicated matter she would lose her head if she tried to think it out. No, there is nothing in what she has said."

"Still, I had rather face a file of soldiers than a jealous woman."

They looked after the young woman until she had disappeared in the crowd, and Remolon then asked:

"Where does she live?"

Diego told him, and Deadwood Dick made note of the address in his mind.

Just at that moment several fellows came along, arm in arm, all the worse for wine.

They were jesting with every woman they met, in a jolly way that was little short of rudeness and yet which could not be regarded as insulting.

Just as they were passing where Dick stood, one stopped and called attention to him.

"See!" he cried, pointing. "It is my *abuela*—my *madraza*. God bless her!"

Dick started to move away, acting his part.

"Not so fast, grandmother," the speaker cried, catching hold of the shawl on Dick's head. "Come and kiss your grandson before you go."

The others laughed heartily, and Dick having stopped, to prevent the shawl from being pulled from his head, took one step toward the fellow and gave him a clip with his left fist.

The blow took the fellow right off his feet and laid him out flat.

All fell back in amazement.

"Does any one else want a kiss?" Dick asked, in Spanish, in a cracked and croaking voice.

This raised a howl of laughter at the expense of the young man who had sought to have some fun with the old woman, and one responded:

"No, grandmamma, thank you; not that kind."

"The devil!" exclaimed Diego Soslayo, aside to his companion. "No old woman could strike a blow like that."

"That's what I say," agreed Remolon. "And didn't make any effort about it, either. She has been standing there some time, now."

"So I noticed."

"Ha! she has lost her hat!"

Dick had forgotten the hat under his left arm, and in striking the blow it fell to the ground.

"And it is a man's hat, at that!" cried Remolon as he stepped forward and picked it up, extending it to the supposed old woman.

"Old lady," he said, with mock politeness, "here is your hat. You just dropped it. Where do you wear it? On your stomach?"

Dick jerked it out of his hand, thrusting it

under his shawl again, at the same time giving an answer that was more startling than polite, in the same croaking way, and walked off.

The crowd was howling with laughter, now.

There was a policeman near at hand, and Remolon stepped to him and said a few words in low tone.

The officer nodded, and stalking after Dick, soon came up with him and laid a heavy hand upon his shoulder, commanding him to stop.

Dick stopped, trembling in the policeman's grasp.

"Show me your face," the officer cried.

For answer, Dick let him feel his fist.

This time it was his right, and the officer was lifted clear and laid out upon his back.

Dick did not wait, but caught up his skirt and ran as hard and fast as he could, to get out of the Plaza and into one of the darkened streets—that is, comparatively darkened.

Immediately there was a whooping and laughing mob at his heels.

As he ran he cut loose the petticoat that impeded his progress, then cast off the shawl, and was himself again.

This Plaza, if the reader has ever been there, is no small spot of earth, and it was some distance to the streets leading from it, but this was really an advantage to Dick.

He was the swiftest runner in the crowd, and reached the street he was aiming for quite a distance ahead of his nearest pursuer.

Into it he turned, and looked to find an open door.

He had no intention of making a long race of it, this time, and only sought to throw his pursuers off the scent.

In a moment he found just what he wanted, and leaping in, with as little of noise as possible, he closed the door and secured it, and was in total darkness, where he stood quiet.

Presently along came the mob, hooting and howling, making this a part of the sport of the evening.

When the leaders and the body of the crowd had passed, Dick opened the door and stepped out.

He fell in with the crowd at once, and was lost among the very men who were seeking him.

Presently shouting was heard elsewhere, and the crowd turned and ran back.

There were four policemen, joyously leading a prisoner among them, while abreast with them ran a young and pretty Mexican girl, pleading the innocence of the man they held.

"I tell you he is not the man you seek, good gentlemen," she cried. "He is innocent of any crime. The other was in the house, and I lied to you to save him, for I mistook him for this friend; but, you have made a mistake— Oh! why will you not heed me?"

These words struck Dick instantly.

He took in the whole situation in a moment, and understood just what had taken place.

The sound of firing in the house from which he had escaped must have drawn the attention of the searchers, and they had probably returned a minute after he had passed the house.

Finding this man there, and mistaking him, they had put him under arrest.

Here was safety for Dick for the time being.

If he was supposed to be under arrest, search for him would cease, and he would be free to go where he would.

He fell in behind the officers, in the van with the crowd, and followed to the lock-up, and as soon as the prisoner had been put inside the girl went weeping away.

Dick followed and spoke to her.

"Your pardon," he said, "but just a word with you."

"Speak," she gave leave.

"Is not that young man Dick Radway, an engineer on the railway?"

"Yes, yes; do you know him? Cannot you save him? Oh! sir! if you can but save him!"

"He is in no danger," Dick declared, drawing nearer and speaking in lower tone. "They can prove nothing against him. Together we can save him, and I want to aid you, for you saved me from the officers less than an hour ago, when I was pursued."

CHAPTER VIII.

CLEVERLY TRAPPED.

At this the girl started and stared hard at Dick.

Her pretty face flushed crimson, her lips parted, and her eyes were wide open with surprise.

"You?" she cried.

"Yes," Dick assured, smiling.

She looked into his frank, handsome face, and his keen, sparkling eyes, and, let us forgive her, for the moment her affection wavered between the other Dick and him, spite of her.

"You will forgive me?" Dick asked, earnestly.

"I ought not to, sir; you basely deceived me, and—and—"

"Well, I am only a man," Dick made excuse, "and what man could resist? But, it was forced upon me, Miss Remolon, and I had to play the part to save my neck."

"And—and you stole embraces which were in no wise intended for you, but for another. You owe apology to him, and you must see him and make it plain to him that I was innocent in the matter."

"Will you forgive me if I promise to do that?"

"Yes, I will, sir."

"Thanks. And now, where can we go to have a brief talk?"

"We can talk here; or, let us stroll on the Plaza, where we will draw no attention in the crowd."

Dick offered his arm, and it was accepted.

"Now, the situation is just this," he said: "You have a lover in the carcel, and I have a friend there. We must get them both out, if we can. But, do you know your lover is in danger of another kind?"

"No: what is it?"

"Diego Soslayo is planning to have him killed, up at the border, to remove him out of his path."

"The dog! And does he think that would better his chances for my hand? He is a fool, and I hate and despise him. My brother is little better. I told you enough for you to understand."

"I understand full well, Dona Luella."

"Can you blame me?"

"Not at all. But, there is one who is in love with Diego."

"She is welcome to him, I am sure. I wish she had him now. But, whom do you mean?"

"Teresa Papada."

"Ha!"

"Then you know her?"

"Oh, yes, and she hates me heartily."

"Why should she hate you, since you do not love the man?"

"She knows it is arranged that I should marry him, that is the reason."

"Do you know where she lives?"

"Yes."

"Let us go there."

"Go there! Mercy! what for?"

"I think she has a scheme to balk Diego's plan."

"But, what good will it do us to go there, even if she has such a scheme?"

"Listen: This night Dona Inez Damasco was stolen from the asylum by two men, and your brother has hinted that maybe she was at the bottom of it."

"And what then?"

"I must learn where she is."
 "What is she to you?"
 "I am her friend, that's all."
 "But, I do not see what good can come of our visiting Teresa."

"I will tell you: You can assure her that you will never wed Diego, and upon that promise I may learn where Dona Inez is."

"That is an assurance I want to give her, so I will go with you. But, I am in a dilemma, for I have given my brother a promise which I do not see how I can break, sir."

"What is that?"

"That I would pass for Inez Damasco if he would not force me to wed Diego."

"Well, you won't do that, now, for I am taking a hand in the game and I won't allow it. I have seen Dona Inez, now, and know her."

"Then it's your intention to rescue her and restore her to her rights?"

"It is."

"But, can you do it?"

"Deadwood Dick does not know defeat."

"What! You are Deadwood Dick? Great heavens, you are doomed!"

"Not yet, at any rate. But, what do you mean by that? What do you know that leads you to say that?"

"Hearken: Diego and my brother have planned to put you out of the way, for they have been expecting that you would come down here, though I don't know how they knew it."

"Yes, they have tried it once and failed."

"But, they mean it."

"No doubt."

"Heavens! are you so hardened to danger that you will not heed? I tell you you are doomed if you remain here."

"So it will have to be, then, for I intend to remain long enough to rescue my pard and accomplish the mission which brought us here. Don't worry about me, if we save your lover."

The girl was clinging to his arm, and Dick felt her trembling with emotion.

"But, I—I do worry," she said. "We have been thrown so strangely together, that—that I regard you with a very friendly affection, now. I cannot help it, after what has passed. It was not my fault; I still love Dick; but, I regard you as a dear friend."

"Don't think of me at all, Miss Remolon. Keep all your thoughts for your lover, and I will see to it that he has a satisfactory explanation of what looks to him rather cloudy just now. But come, and we will see what we can learn."

"Then you insist upon going?"

"Yes, I do, if I have to go alone. I know the address."

"You must not go alone. Come on."

She drew him in a different direction, with her soft, warm arm in his, and still talking they hastened to their destination.

Dick rapped at the door, and there was a long pause.

He fancied he heard voices within, but when the door was opened it was only by the young woman he had seen on the Plaza.

Dick and Luella walked in, and Dick said: "We have come to see you, Miss Papada, to give some information and to ask for some."

"I do not know what you can have to tell me, sir, and it is pretty certain I can give you no information. What do you want?"

"Close the door and be polite enough to ask us to the sitting-room."

"You are full of assurance, I must say. But, wait here a moment. I will be back."

She had brought a lamp to the door with her, and this she now put in Dick's hand and ran away to the interior.

Dick thought strange of this, and remembered the voices he had heard, or supposed or imagined he had heard, but he said

nothing to his companion. He meant to be on his guard.

In a few moments the young woman reappeared.

"Come right this way," she called to them. "I had to arrange the room, for it was out of order."

They followed her, and entered a sitting-room.

Now for the first time Dick's companion exposed her face, and the young woman of the house exclaimed.

"What! Luella Remolon! you?"

"Yes, I."

"What want you here?"

"I have come to tell you something."

"What can you tell me, base thing that you are, to rob me—"

"You have not been robbed, young lady," interrupted Dick. "Let's sit down and have a talk."

He chose a place where he would have his back toward a corner, so that he could not be surprised, for he did not feel that everything was all right here.

The others sat down, and Dick continued: "Miss Remolon has come to tell you, Miss Papada, that she does not care a rap for Diego Soslayo; that she has no intention of marrying him, and that you are welcome to him."

"Is this true?"

"It is."

The eyes of the young woman sparkled.

"But, this is not without expecting something in return," she said. "What do you want of me?"

"I want to know what you have done with Dona Inez Damasco," said Dick severely.

The young woman started.

"What do I know about her?" she cried.

"You know all about her, for it was by your directions she was stolen from the asylum."

She now appeared excited, and toyed nervously with a fold of her dress. She did not speak at once, but waited.

"I know nothing about her," she finally declared.

"We know better," insisted Dick.

"Well, if I did, what then? Why should I steal her from an asylum, where she was already safe? What motive could I have in it?"

"Do not think you can fool us," said Dick sternly. "You did it to force the attention of Diego Soslayo to yourself. You intend to threaten him with exposure unless he will wed you."

A look of surprise was on the girl's face.

"I do not admit anything of the kind," she parried.

"You do not have to admit it, we know it. Unless Diego will marry you, you intend to set Dona Inez free and see that she comes into her rights."

"I don't admit it at all. I know nothing about her, sir."

"While you may think you can fool us, let me tell you that you cannot do so," Dick declared. "Now we want to know where the Dona Inez is, and if you will not tell us, the worse for you. I mean business."

"Dog! Fool!" the girl cried, springing to her feet in a rage. "If I knew, do you think I would tell you? Never! You would bring the heiress forth, and rob my lover of the prize almost within his grasp."

"Further proof that you are at the bottom of it," commented Dick. "You shall tell what you know."

"Fool, again! You could not make me tell, even did I know. What? do you imagine I would ruin my lover's chances, by playing into your hands? Never! I will be true to him, and he shall love me for it. I can play a part as well as you, Luella Remolon!"

"Further proof still," said Dick. "Your own words have hanged you, young woman." "And in coming here you have come to your doom."

At that instant Luella leaped to her feet with a cry of fright, looking in a terrified manner behind Dick, and he turned his head.

As he did so two revolvers were pressed against his neck, and he was ordered to put up his hands. Two men were behind him, and these two were Diego Soslayo and Fernando Remolon.

How they had come there Dick could not tell.

It must have been by a silent secret door opening out of the corner.

There was no choice, and Dick had to obey the command, so he put his hands up as ordered.

"Well?" he coolly asked.

"Not very well for you, murderer, you will find," declared Diego, sternly.

"What do you intend doing with me?"

"Turning you over to the police to answer for the killing of that beggar on the Plaza to-night."

"You are off your calculation there, gentlemen. The man who did that is already under arrest for the crime. I know nothing about it."

"If a man has been arrested, he is innocent, for *you* are the one who did the deed. You were *seen* to do it. And now you have saved your own neck at the expense of an innocent man!"

Luella drew back from Dick with a look of horror on her pale face.

"Look you, Luella," cried her brother, grabbing her arm. "I know not what this man has said to you, but you see for yourself what he would do if he could. He would hang Dick Radway to save his own neck. This man is one of the greatest rascals unhanged!"

"Much obliged to you for the recommendation," said Dick, sneeringly. "The lady knows better than that, however."

"Heavens!" cried the girl, pressing her hands to her head. "Which am I to believe?"

"Believe your own heart, and nothing else," advised Dick.

"That will do!"

With a cry she turned quickly, sprung to the door, and was out and away before she could have been detained.

"Let her go," said Fernando. "She will go home to cry it out, and will feel all the better when she awakes in the morning. We have played a double game here, and have drawn a prize."

"What's to be done with him?"

"We'll lodge him in jail and free Dick Radway."

"But, what is my answer to be, before you go, Diego Soslayo?" demanded the young woman.

"I must have time to think," Diego answered. "Keep the prisoner safe, and I will let you know in a short time. Things are terribly complicated."

"Not so, but very plain and simple, if you will only come to my terms. You have your foe in your power, and I have the heiress in my keeping. What is more simple than to work on the lines I have laid down?"

At that instant their prisoner gave them a surprise.

CHAPTER IX.

A TURNING OF THE TABLES.

FERNANDO REMOLON had stepped apart from Diego, feeling that Dick was secure in his hands, now that he had surrendered.

Diego was attending to what was being said, as well as taking part himself, and while he still held his revolver against Dick's neck he was allowing his attention to be drawn away.

Of a sudden Deadwood Dick drew back.

from the tube of the weapon, and with the same motion jerked it out of Diego's hand.

Fernando turned toward him, but before he could act Dick had fired at the lamp and they were plunged in darkness and Dick had leaped to another part of the room.

Remolon blazed away at the place where he had last seen him, a couple of shots in quick succession, but the only result was to bring a howl of terror out of his accomplice in villainy.

"Look out!" yelled Diego. "You will hit me, fool!"

"Fool yourself, to have allowed this to happen! You ought to be hit!"

"Where is he? Don't let him get out of here, for we are two to one against him."

"Three to one," spoke up the young woman. "Take him, for I have locked the door and there is no escape for him."

"Open the door," ordered Dick, "or I will open fire on you in a way you won't relish. I've got as good a chance of hitting you as you have of plugging me. Open the door!"

His answer was a shot in his direction.

The bullet came within an ace of hitting him, and Dick returned the compliment promptly.

As it was dark, though, his shot missed, too, and for a moment there was silence in the room, each side seeking an advantage.

Dick was moving cautiously toward the door, determined that he would get out in some manner or other, once he reached it, but it was destined that he should not escape.

He thought he was wary and watchful, but he was not wary enough.

One of the men sprung suddenly upon him.

Dick fired, having a finger on the trigger, but the bullet did no harm, and in the same second Diego Soslayo was yelling heartily for assistance.

It was he that had attacked, and Dick would soon have been able to shake him off, but Fernando came quickly to his aid and Dick was not a match for them both, though for a time he did make it interesting for them.

"Capture him, Diego! Take him, Senor Remolon!"

So cried the girl, clapping her hands to encourage them on, that being all she could do.

"Give us light," called Fernando.

"Yes, yes; I did not think of it."

The girl was heard busy at the table, and in a few moments the lamp was relighted, minus the chimney.

It was an advantage to both sides in the struggle, but as the odds was against Deadwood Dick he was overcome and his hands were quickly bound.

"There, curse you!" cried Diego. "That for your smartness!"

He gave Dick a hard kick as he spoke.

"What's to be done with him?" asked Fernando.

"To the jail with him!" cried the girl.

"But, that will be to liberate Dick Radway."

"I know it; that is what I want. To the jail with him!"

"But, if Radway is freed, that will block our game, for he will stand by Luella."

"Let him. That's what I want him to do. Let her wed him, if she will, and then you will marry me. Harken, Diego Soslayo."

"Well?"

"I can play that role as well as Luella Remolon."

"Yes, yes, no doubt about it; but, we cannot do anything without the aid of our good friend Remolon here."

"He will aid you still."

"No, it is only on condition that I share with him that he aids me at all, and if you take the place of his sister he will have no

further object in it. Teresa, you stand in your own light."

"Refuse me if you dare, Diego Soslayo!"

"What will you do?"

"Restore the heiress to her rights, and you may whistle."

The two men looked at each other, as if trying to make up their minds what could be done.

"What do you say?" Diego asked.

"You had better give up Luella and come to her terms," Fernando advised.

Deadwood Dick caught a sly signal accompanying the words, and so understood why Diego fell in with the plan so readily.

"Well, I'll do it," Diego cried. "You are a brave girl, Teresa, and you are worthy the love of any man. We'll put this fellow in jail, and after that we'll see you again."

"To-night?"

"If not to-night, then to-morrow."

"All right, you will find me here. Don't try to deceive me."

"Never fear for that. What we say, that we mean. Come along with us, Deadwood Dick."

The two fellows laid hold upon Dick and forced him to accompany them from the room and out of the house, and Dick did not try to resist.

Once out upon the street they led him off in the direction of the jail, where they presently arrived, and they knocked to summon the *carcelero*, who presently opened the door to them.

The moment Remolon mentioned his name, respect was shown to him, for he had political power, as has been hinted before.

Just behind these men, with their prisoner, came two gentlemen.

"Ha! that you, Remolon?" one exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," the response. "Ha! I did not recognize you."

"We have come to see what kind of a mistake has been made here. We have been sent for."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, our engineer, Radway, has sent for us to come and prove his identity and get him out of the box. There has evidently been some mistake."

These men were two officials of the railway.

"Yes, there has been a mistake," admitted Remolon. "We have just got hold of the right prisoner now, and were on the point of setting your man free. There has been a mistake all around."

They entered, still talking, and the prisoner was brought forth to be identified.

"This is Dick Radway, of course," the railroad men said promptly.

There was some formal official process to be gone through, and that done, Radway was set at liberty.

"A word with you," spoke Deadwood Dick, in English.

"Well, what is it?"

"I am as innocent of this crime as you are, but I'll take your place. I am the man Miss Remolon mistook for you."

"Yes, curse you, I thought so. I hope they will hang you as high as a kite for your infernal impudence! Lucky for you you are a prisoner, or I would call you to account."

"You are hot in the head," said Dick. "What I wanted to say is, that it was all my fault, and the young lady had nothing to do with it. She is as innocent as a flower of the field. Go and find her at once, for she has something to tell you; I am not able to tell you here."

He referred to the threat he had heard, which he did not care to let out before Diego.

"You have seen her again, then?"

"I have."

"What for? It was surely no accidental meeting this time."

"On the contrary, it was, but, we were planning to get you out of here. She will tell you all about it."

"Well, I don't know what to make of you, anyhow. I'll do as you say, but the Lord help you if you deceive me, or have deceived me. I'll have your heart out, by the infernal!"

"Do you know who I am?"

"I don't know, and I little care."

"Did you ever hear of Deadwood Dick, Junior?"

"Great Scott! you are not Deadwood Dick!"

"I am nobody else, I assure you."

"Then you are no murderer, I'll be bound. I'll have you out of here, that I promise you. I'm off."

This man had heard of Deadwood Dick, quite evidently, and at mention of his name he looked at him in a new light. With good cause to be jealous, from his point of view, he also rejoiced.

He went away immediately, and Dick was put in the cell where he had been.

What had passed between them had been spoken in low tones, so that the chance for its being overheard would be small.

As soon as Dick was in his cell, he heard a familiar voice near at hand.

"Hello, Dick!" it called. "Hello, Dick!"

"That you, Polly?" Dick answered. "Where is Pete?"

"Pete here; he all right. Polly wants to guzzle some booze!"

"Hillo, Dicky, boy!" sung out Pete Parrot's voice. "They got ye, hey?"

"Yes, after a time," Dick answered. "And I've got a bushel of news for you, but can't give you a word of it out loud."

"I don't think that's much danger, Dicky; not a consarned one of 'em can talk a word of United States, far as I know. Spit it right out ef et's anything I'd orter know."

Dick considered for a few moments, and finally gave Pete a sketch of what he had been passing through, and what he had learned.

In the mean time Luella Remolon had been at work.

From the house of Teresa Papada she went straight to the residence of one of the high officials of the city.

There she applied, and would not be put off for an excuse, and at last a man came out to learn her name and what she wanted, and the answer she sent was that she was a sister to Fernando Remolon.

This message had a magical effect, for she was taken immediately to the official's presence.

"Your pardon, Dona," he apologized. "You should have sent in your name at once. Anything I can do to favor Senor Remolon shall remain undone."

"I would ask a favor on my own account, sir," said Luella.

"It is all the same; you have only to name it."

"My lover is in jail, having been falsely accused."

"Ha! and who is your lover?"

"Dick Radway, an engineer on the Mexican National Railway. It is a case of mistaken identity. Cannot you release him for me?"

"What is the charge?"

"Murder."

"Peste! but that is serious. I dare not do it, until I have looked into it, my dear. Wait till the morrow; then I will make it my business to investigate it the very first thing."

"I did not suppose you would do it, sir; but there is one thing you can do, if you will."

"Name it."

"Give me an order admitting me into the prison, so that I may pass the cheerless night with him, if he is kept there. I have some reason to think the real murderer has been

found, and in that case he will be freed, of course."

"To be sure. Yes, I will gladly do that for you, for I can see you are very much in earnest. Here, I will write it immediately." And so he did.

Luella thanked him heartily when she received the precious slip of paper, and speedily took her leave.

She did not go at once to the jail, but hastened home, where she remained for quite a little time, and when she came forth she was in male attire.

The disguise was perfect, and she looked like a handsome Mexican youth of eighteen.

She now made her way to the prison, and applied for admission.

"What's wanted, at this hour?" growled the guard.

It was, by the way, now past the hour of midnight, and this was an unusual thing.

To be sure, not a great while had elapsed since the exchange of prisoners had been made, but the guard had settled down for a nap and was angry at being disturbed.

"I want the governor of the prison," was the answer, in a positive manner.

"Well, you won't get him, at this hour. Go away with you."

"If you want to keep your place you will call him."

"By what authority do you demand it, sir?"

Take a look at that, and you will see. Do not keep me waiting here, for, it may not be necessary to call the governor."

She handed her pass through the opening in the strong door, and an exclamation escaped the jailer the moment he saw the signature and without delay he opened the door.

"Your pardon, your pardon!" he humbly craved. "If you had only said that in the first place, it would have been all right. You have only to command me."

"Take me at once to the cell of the man accused of murdering the beggar."

The man looked again at the written order, to be sure.

It was all right; it was on official paper, the signature was genuine, and it ordered explicitly that the hearer was to be accorded the utmost favors.

"Come right this way," the man said, taking up his light and leading along one of the passages. "Right this way. It may be a little out of the usual, but the governor won't thank me for waking him and so I'll take it upon myself, since I know the order is genuine enough. And here we are, sir."

CHAPTER X.

THE ESCAPE. THE TRAPPERS TRAPPED.

As he said this, the *demandadero de una cárcel*—which is Spanish for "turnkey"—stopped before one of the cells.

Deadwood Dick, hearing them coming, and recognizing the voice of the disguised young woman, was on the alert, ready to take any cue or advantage of anything that might happen.

"This is where he is?" the supposed young man asked.

"It is."

"Dick?" she called. "Dick?"

Suddenly Dick Bristol recalled what had happened at the house where he had last seen this girl, and he believed she was there to rescue not him, but her lover. Her brother had aroused her suspicions of Dick's good intent.

"I am here," Dick answered, imitating the voice of Dick Radway.

"Good! I am here to rescue you. Jailer, open this door, and let this man go free, if you value your life."

Dick, from the darkness of his cell, saw through the grating in the door the gleam of a revolver, and saw the jailer spring back and heard him exclaim:

"What! You have come here with treachery?"

"You saw the order, did you not?"

"Yes; but—"

"Did it not direct you to grant me *any* favor I might ask?"

"It did; but it cannot mean this, for the senior has not power to order the release of a prisoner."

"Maybe not, but I have, sir!"

"I cannot obey you—"

"You will obey or die; take your choice."

"*Carrambo!* you are likely to find yourself in a cell. Come out of here with me instantly."

Dick heard the click of the weapon, now.

"Open that door, and open it instantly," the girl's voice sternly ordered. "I give you just half a minute to decide. If I have to kill you I can then do it myself with your keys."

There was no doubting her intention, and the terrified jailer had to comply, and did.

He opened the door of the cell, and in an instant Deadwood Dick leaped upon him.

The jailer was a strong man, but Dick was stronger and much more active.

The lantern went out in the struggle, and the corridor was only dimly lighted by the rays from a distant lamp.

"Give up!" cried Dick, still imitating the voice of Dick Radway. "You'll be killed if you don't! I am going out of here, if I have to leave you with your throat cut!"

He had no intention of killing the fellow, as the reader will understand; he only wanted to terrify him, and he succeeded.

"I surrender!" the jailer gasped. "Spare my life!"

"All right, I spare it if you remain quiet."

Dick had taken a revolver from the fellow's hip, and now bound his hands securely.

This done, he took the keys from his hand and opened the door of the cell in which Pete Parrot was confined, and Pete came forth immediately.

"By thar tanel, Dicky, boy," he cried, "but this hyer is hansum! We owe a heap to this young feller, I kalkylate. Young man, you hev the ondyin' regards of Pedro Papagayo!"

"*Valgame Dios!*" cried the girl, in her natural voice. "Are you not Dick Radway?" turning upon Dick.

"No, lady," Dick answered. "I am here in his place. I'm just as greatly obliged to you, however."

"What have I done, then? Where is my lover? You are the man who would have allowed him to remain here to save your own neck, as my brother said, and I have risked all to save *you!*"

"You have done a good deal," assured Dick.

"Bet yer life!" chipped in Polly, from Pete's shoulder.

"You shet up!" cried Pete. "Come, let's *vamos*—that is ter say, git out of hyer."

"If we can," added Dick. "I hear other voices, now, and no doubt the place is alarmed, for we have been rather noisy."

A door was heard to clang, and a voice called for the keeper.

"Answer!" cried Dick, presenting his revolver to the man's head. "Answer, and say all is well!"

This the fellow shouted.

"What are you doing there, and what is the noise about?" was the demand.

"Tell 'em a man is sick," ordered Pete Parrot. "Tell 'em it's all right, and you can 'tend to it."

This, too, was shouted, but it did not have the desired effect.

Steps were heard coming, lights gleamed along the corridors, and Deadwood Dick hurriedly whispered.

"We are in for it, and must fight. We must shoot, but not to hit, for that will make

us trouble. We can scare them off, if they think we mean it."

"No fear o' my shootin', with nothin' ter shoot with," said Pete.

"Take the turnkey's stick," said Dick.

This Pete did quickly.

The men were seen, now, and there were two of them.

Dick, Pete, and the young woman in disguise stood behind the open door of Dick's cell.

The bound keeper was lying behind them, and all the approaching men could see was the open cell door, till they were close upon it.

In a moment they were at hand, when out sprung Dick and Pete, followed by Luella, who realized that this was her only hope of getting out of the trap she had set for herself unwittingly.

"*Fuera!*" cried Pete Parrot. "Out of the way! We are going out of here if we have to go out over your dead bodies! Look out for yourselves!"

Forward he sprung upon them, with his heavy stick, Dick and Luella right behind him.

The two men dropped their lanterns and raised their clubs.

Pete knocked one over with a quick blow, and the other was seized and run off in the direction of the doors, struggling and shouting.

Now the whole jail was in an uproar, and the prisoners were setting up cries of various kinds, everything adding to the confusion of the moment. It was an exciting experience.

"Sock et to 'em!" cried the parrot on Pete's shoulder. "Sock et to 'em!"

"You shut your head and hold fast, feathered cuss," ordered Pete. "We'll see to this part of et."

"You bet! Polly wants whisk! We'll take a booze on this, you bet!"

They were now at the door, which Dick opened with the keys he had taken from the turnkey, and shoving back the man they had captured they locked him in and made off.

Turning the nearest corner, they hurried away at a running pace, and in a moment saw ahead of them a procession crossing the street they were in, something in connection with the festival occasion.

It took them but a few moments to fall in with the crowd, and they were for the time being safe.

"Now what's ter be done?" asked Pete Parrot.

"We must find and rescue that girl," answered Dick.

"And how is that ter be done?"

"This lady must aid us."

"I can't do that," Luella declared. "I must get home as soon as I dare drop out of this procession."

"You *must* aid us," urged Dick. "If you will do so, we will stand ready to defend your lover against his foes, when chance offers."

"He has escaped them now."

"Yes, but they have not given him up."

"What can I do?"

"We must decoy Teresa Papada."

"And how can we do that? And what for?"

"She must be made to believe her prisoner has escaped."

"She will know better."

"No, she will have a doubt. Harken: You must go to her house in haste, and say the young woman has got away. Say no more, but hasten off and leave her in doubt. We will do the rest, and you can then go home."

"Well, I will do that."

"It is so arranged, and we will drop out presently."

To their alarm, however, the procession turned and headed in the very direction of the jail.

Here might be trouble, and Dick was on the point of saying they would drop out at once, when some policemen were seen hurrying along. "It won't do," he said to Pete. "We'll have to stay in line now. If they recognize us, we must make a fight for it and lope off on the tall run. If they shut us up again, we are dumped." "You bet."

This was not the parrot, but Pete himself. He had put the bird out of sight in his pocket.

As they approached the jail, they saw that all was excitement around it. A crowd was there, and the jailers and some policemen were in front talking away in a greatly-excited manner.

The procession passed along, the music playing and the paraders singing, and Dick and Pete sung as loudly as the rest.

This was the ending of the night's festival.

Persons dropped out of the line as they came to their places of abode, now, and with a cheerful "*a Dios!*" entered their houses.

Finally Dick and Pete, with the disguised young woman, left the line at the junction of another street, and with the same cheerful farewell, and good-by, took another direction.

As soon as they were safe, Luella led the way.

"Here we are," she said finally. "I will now run ahead and deliver the message."

Dick recognized the street, and knew the young woman was playing them no trick, since there was no good reason why she should do so, and he and Pete fell back.

Luella made a great noise at the door of the house.

There was a quick response, proving that Teresa had not yet retired.

It was she who opened the door, and Luella managed to keep her face from being plainly seen as she said:

"I am sent to tell you that the young woman has escaped. That is all; man said you would understand what is meant. No, no, I know nothing more; I have done my errand."

Teresa tried to question, but was shut off in this way, and Luella quickly left the door and was gone.

Teresa called to her to stop, but it was useless, and the next moment the other was out of sight.

Dick and Pete, in hiding, saw Teresa stamp her foot impatiently.

For some seconds she stood in doubt, and then she turned back into the house quickly, leaving the door ajar.

"That means she's coming forth," whispered Dick.

"Et jest do, pard," agreed Pete.

They were not mistaken: in a few seconds the young woman reappeared, with a shawl wrapped around her, and hastened away from the house.

Dick and Pete followed with care and caution.

They had now to be doubly careful, for they must not lose sight of their game nor awaken the suspicion of the police.

Teresa was a swift walker, and led the way rapidly out of the city by the shortest course, stopping finally at the door of a rather miserable looking abode on the outskirts.

Here she knocked.

Dick and Pete ran forward and got behind the house.

The house was of Mexican style, but adjoining it was one of American architecture.

This building had a low, sloping shed in the rear, and it was but the work of a moment for the two men to mount this and creep up to the roof of the house adjoining it.

This was flat, and with a leap and a swing they were upon its top, and could look over into the interior court.

By this time voices were heard, and the girl had been admitted. A light was seen below, coming from an interior window, and Deadwood Dick dropped down within, after a brief consultation with Pete.

But, no sooner down than something unexpected happened.

There was a growl, a snarl, a terrific bark, almost all in one sound, and a big dog leaped at Dick's throat.

Dick had had no warning, and was taken at a disadvantage, but he was on the defensive immediately and grappled with the brute with all his strength, one hand closing upon its lower jaw.

Loud voices were immediately heard, a door was heard to open, and out rushed two men, one bearing a light.

The dog was tearing at Dick with its claws, ripping his clothes and threatening to disembowel him, but Pete Parrot was to the rescue as quickly as he could think and act.

Down he leaped, caring nothing for the distance, and as he came down he dealt the dog a blow with his club that knocked it insensible.

The two men, surprised out of their wits, almost, stood and stared.

In the same moment Deadwood Dick wheeled upon them, a revolver in his hand, ordering them to put up their hands.

As he did this there came a shot from the window, and Dick reeled back and fell up against the interior wall for support, the two men instantly throwing themselves upon Pete Parrot.

There was immediately a fierce struggle, but it was of short duration, and in a few seconds Pete received a blow that rendered him insensible and he and Dick were in the hands of their foes. The tables had turned upon them, and they were in a trap. It might fare ill with them now.

CHAPTER XI.

A NEW ACTOR APPEARS ON THE SCENE.

JUST now, however, there was a new actor in the play.

At the time when Dick and Pete were overcome, and were made prisoners, a face was looking down into the interior court of the house from the roof.

It was the face of a Mexican, a young man and good-looking, and his eyes had a gleam in them that boded ill for one party or the other upon whom he was gazing in the court beneath.

If the friend of the two captors, he did not make his presence known, and if his sympathies were with the prisoners, he evidently hesitated about attacking their captors. He was armed, for a weapon was in his grasp, but for some reason he took no part.

While he hesitated, the inner door was thrown suddenly open again, and two men sprung into the arena.

These were armed, and they glared at the two men before them.

We know the pair, having seen them before. They were Diego Soslayo and Fernando Remolon.

For a few moments the four did nothing but glare, as if neither side was anxious to attack, and Fernando was the one to break the silence.

"Is it peace or war?" he asked.

"Are you friends or foes?" was demanded.

"We prefer to be friends, if you will allow it."

"Then let it be peace, since friends need not war against one another."

All put up their weapons, and as they did so Teresa Papada came out from the interior.

"Dogs!" she cried. "You have followed me here!"

"You have guessed aright," answered Fernando, smiling. "We played the detective upon you in order to learn where you have hidden away your rival."

"Well, little good may it do you, then."

"Ah! but now we know."

"You lie!"

"If we don't, we are on the right track. Your friends here must tell us, for they surely know."

"Did they know they would not tell you, dogs?"

"That's not a very loving name," said Diego.

"You have almost turned my love to hate against you."

"If that is the case, you will not insist upon my marrying you."

"Even so, my hatred will make me all the more bitter against the woman you desire to wed."

"But, we have come to rescue another," now said Fernando. "You must not forget that she is my golden prize, my pretty Teresa. If you cannot wed Diego in peace, suppose you and I embark?"

She spat at him fiercely for answer.

"Then you won't agree to that, eh? Well, I'll use my best influence with my friend Diego in your behalf. But, there seems to be some misunderstanding here, for it is Inez Damasco we are in search of, while Luella Remolon is your rival. Can't we come to terms?"

"Never!"

"You gain nothing by holding Inez a prisoner."

"She is the only weapon I hold over your heads, the only means I have of forcing terms with you."

"Then you think you hold the winning hand?"

"I know I do."

"Will you do us the favor to explain how it is?"

"Yes, I will. In the first place we are three against two, if it comes to a fight. I can shoot as good as the next one, and the chances are in our favor. Then, I have already done a work for which you ought to thank me."

"What is that?"

"I have been the means of clearing the whole road for you, if you will only come to my terms without further trouble."

"Explain."

"Why, here are your two detective foes, prisoners at your feet. The heiress is in my keeping. You, Diego Soslayo, marry me, and let me pass for Inez Damasco, and the whole thing is already in your hands."

"There's something in this," assented Diego.

"Yes, but where do I come in?" asked Fernando.

"You and Diego can arrange your own terms," said the girl.

"And that lets Luella out of it, and makes it easy for her to wed the man of her choice, her American lover," said Fernando.

"Curse him!" grated Diego. "Peste! are we going to allow a woman to balk our plans, Fernando? Do you think I will give up the woman I love to a rival, and be forced to marry one I do not love?"

"Your words settle all," spoke Teresa, freezing.

During this Deadwood Dick and Pete Parrot lay as if dead, and the man on the roof looked quietly down upon the scene.

He took no part, as yet, though it was plain enough that he had a part to play; but what it was could not easily have been guessed. One thing, he had an object in remaining unseen.

After her words, the young woman turned and entered the house.

Now came a shot from the inner window, the same as before, and it was a close call for Diego Soslayo.

Had he not happened to bend over, just at the instant the trigger was pulled, he would have been a dead man, for the young woman had aimed to kill.

With a leap and an oath he got out of range and returned the shot, but without effect, for the young woman had been quick enough to dodge, seeing that her own bullet had missed its mark.

"Capture these men!" she ordered her aides.

"Easier said than done," retorted Fernando.

"Let them try it!" cried Diego.

"Make your escape," one of the captors of Dick and Pete whispered. "We need not seek one another's blood. Get yourselves off."

"No, sir, we are here on business," rejoined Fernando. "We mean now to take this young woman prisoner, and we want to know where the other is. If you want to get off lightly you had better tell."

"We know nothing, senor."

"That may be, but you know this much."

"We know nothing of any woman, save this one."

"Liars! do not think you can blind me. Disclose this secret to us, and your reward will be double what this young woman has promised you."

"No, no; for, even did we know, we would not tell. Did we know anything, it would reveal that we had been intrusted with a secret, and had that been the case nothing could draw it from us."

"Well, well," with a harsh oath, "say no more about that. How would you like to earn a double reward? But, you shake your head, to say that you are earning nothing at present. So be it. How would you like to earn something in a strictly honest manner? As you have said, we need not fight."

The fellows looked willing, but said nothing.

"You have overcome here our two worst foes. If you can dispose of them, in a quiet way, so that no one will ever be the wiser, we will give you a hundred pesos for your trouble."

"We can do that, senor," said the spokesman.

"And you will?"

"We will."

"Good. But, the woman, Diego; she must be taken care of."

"You are right. We want no more bullets from her direction. Let's make sure of her."

They ran along under the window from which the shot had come, and entered the house, where they were gone some minutes.

The man on the roof had disappeared.

Presently the two men came out again, swearing roundly.

"Curse her!" cried Diego, "she has given us the slip. Tell us where she has gone, you men."

"How should we know, senor?"

"But you do know, curse you!"

"Curses will not help you any, señor."

"We will pay you double if you will show us."

"We could not do that, were you to promise us treble."

"Then you will not deal with us in this. Very well. But, the other bargain stands?"

"Yes, we will dispose of these for you, since they are disposed of already. That is, if you will give us the hundred pesos now."

Fernando took the money from his pocket and paid it over.

"I will give you nine hundred more," he offered, "if you will show us where the girl is hid away."

The fellow who had received the hundred looked at his accomplice in crime, but the latter shook his head in the negative, so the first made answer:

"No, not if you made it ten thousand. Be off with you, now, and leave us to finish our work."

Cursing and complaining, the two scoundrels took their leave.

The dog had by this time recovered from the effect of the blow it had received, and was snarling in an angry fashion.

Deadwood Dick now came to, and the dog was upon him in an instant, with its teeth at his throat, but a word from one of the men caused it to slink away to a corner of the court.

"As easy a way as any to have them disposed of," spoke one of the fellows.

"Yes, but too terrible," said the other. "Not that I'd care, if it wouldn't make the dog too bloodthirsty."

"Well, let's put them away."

"Yes, quickly."

At that instant a strange voice struck upon their ears.

"Hello! Here's the devil to pay again! Pete done up! Dick done up! Polly get no whisk now."

The fellows stood with weapons in hand, staring at the two men on the ground at their feet, but it was plain that neither of them had said a word. Who, then, had spoken?

That they could not understand what had been said was evident.

"Who spoke?" asked one.

"It was an American," said the other.

"Hello, Pete! Hello, Dick! Polly want whisk! Polly want booze!"

"It is a voice from the ground," declared one of the now alarmed Mexicans. "It is *el espectro*."

"Yes, a ghost, as you live."

They were backing away from Dick and Pete, in affright, and no wonder, for here was a voice coming from a place where they knew no human could be, in life, as it certainly was not Pete.

Of a sudden came a shot from the top of the house, and the dog, in the corner where it stood, gave a yelp and a leap and fell dead.

The same instant a supple form leaped down into the inclosure, and a strong voice cried:

"Up with your hands, you cowards!"

It was the man who had been on the roof, and who had disappeared for a time.

"Yes, up with 'em, you skunks!" echoed Pete Parrot, springing to his feet as if nothing had been the matter with him.

He had been watching his chance for such a move as this.

"Bet your life!" sung out Polly. "Sock it to em, Pete, sock it to 'em!"

The bird had got out of Pete's pocket, now, and was perched upon his shoulder as usual.

"Surrender!" the stranger commanded again. "I won't speak the third time, you dogs! Drop your weapons and put up your hands, or die!"

The ruffians recognized a master, in this man, and obeyed his order as if mechanically. They let fall their weapons and put up their hands, backing away into a corner.

"Hold them covered there, sir," said the new-comer to Pete, then, "and I will see how badly your companion here is injured. I hope it is not badly, for there is work for us three to do. If one of them attempts to get away, shoot him down like a dog."

"You can bet I will, pard. But, who are you?"

"My name is Gaspar Montero."

CHAPTER XII.

EXCITING STRUGGLE.

THOUGH neither Deadwood Dick nor Pete Parrot could have any knowledge of the stranger by his name alone, the reader is more enlightened than these were at that stage of the game.

It will be remembered that this was the name

used by the men who had stolen Inez Damasco out of the asylum, the decoy which had led her to trust herself fully into their hands. Gaspar Montero was Inez Damasco's lover, who had been removed by Diego Soslayo.

The attack of the dog had rendered Deadwood Dick nearly, if not quite, unconscious again, but he was now recovering.

"Are you much hurt?" asked Montero, in English.

"I don't know," answered Dick. "My head feels queer."

"Let me see."

He removed Dick's big Mexican hat, and his fingers immediately found a lump that had been raised on the side of his head.

"You are all right," he cheerfully declared. "See, this steel ornament on your hat has saved your life. You are worth a dozen dead men, and will soon be yourself again."

Dick made an effort to get his powers back, and was speedily able to stand up.

"Who are you, señor?" he made inquiry.

Montero explained.

"And how came you here?" Dick asked.

"That will involve the telling of my story in full."

"Which can be done in a few minutes, no doubt, while I am getting my grip."

"Yes, I can tell it briefly. Diego Soslayo was my rival, and he was aided by that rascal Remolon. Together they lured me away and made a prisoner of me, and I have only just escaped from their hands."

"Well, I came here immediately to find Inez, but learned that she had been confined in the asylum. I went there, only to find the place in an uproar over the escape of an inmate, and that the very one I sought. How and where should I seek her?"

"If any one would be likely to know, Diego Soslayo was the man, and I sought him. I got on his track only a little while ago, and followed him to the home of a young woman named Teresa Papada, who has been in love with him for some time, as it appears. They did not go to the house exactly, but spied upon it, and I upon them; as I have now reason to believe you were doing, too."

"You are right."

"Well, I followed them, as did you, and in consequence, here I am."

"And only for you we might have got the worst of it, too. We must do something to cancel the obligation, sir."

"I am going to give you the chance, my friends. I have located where Inez Damasco is imprisoned, and want you to come with me to the rescue. But, I know not who you are."

"I am Deadwood Dick, Junior," Dick explained.

"What? Not Deadwood Dick?"

"No other."

Montero showed the surprise he felt, and grasped Dick's hand warmly.

"And I'm his pard," cried Pete Parrot. "Homely old Peter Parrot, with my bird Polly along with me."

"I have heard of you, too, sir. This is certainly a pleasure. I must hear your story, Deadwood Dick, and what brought you here. But, not now, for we must go to the rescue as speedily as possible."

"Another minute and I shall have my strength. How have you learned where the lady is? She certainly is not in this house."

"No, she is not here, but she is not far away. I found her by following Teresa."

"Hal then no time is to be lost!" Dick cried.

"You fear—"

"That that jealous and vengeful young woman may do her harm."

"You are right! Come, let us to the rescue at once! Not a minute is to be wasted!"

"But, what about these hyer cusses?" asked Pete Parrot.

"Señor," one of the prisoners now spoke up, "we are in your power, and we are willing to serve you if you will spare us."

"How do we know you are to be trusted?" cried Montero.

"We swear we will serve you well. We have agreed it together. All we ask is that you will let us go our way when you have rescued the young woman. We do not want to go to prison."

"Disarm them, Pete," ordered Dick. "We will trust them, and if they try to fool us a bullet will be their reward."

"Salve, señor! We swear to be true to our word with you."

They were immediately disarmed.

"Now, lead the way out of here," said Dick.

"And then you, Señor Montero, be our guide to the place where the lady is."

They were soon out of the house, and Gaspar Montero set forward on a run to their place of destination, the others following close at his heels.

The place was still further on the outskirts, but was not far distant from the house from which they had started, and they were soon there, and as they came up the cries of a woman were heard within.

"Spare me! spare me!" was the piteous appeal.

"Never!" was the answer, also in a woman's voice. "I intend to have your life."

Then instantly followed a scream, and the sound of a struggle going on within the peculiar-looking house.

The house was of the Mexican order, but had been changed into something of the appearance of a stable, or more properly a cage for wild animals.

The door had been enlarged, and in it was an opening in which three strong iron bars were set. Perhaps it had been used for a handy lock-up at some period of the city's history.

And it was just at this critical moment that two others appeared upon the scene.

These were Diego Soslayo and Fernando Remolon, who had been hunting for the missing Teresa, and who had espied Dick and the others running bither.

Dick and Pete drew their revolvers instantly, and had the advantage when the others came up, as they were just reaching for theirs. All was excitement, and the first thing to be done was the rescue of the young woman.

Deadwood Dick looked quickly about him.

A few yards away stood a stout pole of some height, having been used for some purpose or other.

It was in the ground, but was leaning as if it had been there for years, and pointing to this pole, Dick hastened to command:

"Bring that stick, quick, and force the door!"

Two of the men sprung immediately to obey, and Dick turned to the new-comers.

"Do not you try to interfere here," he gave warning. "It will be at the cost of your lives if you do, so take warning."

The response was a snarl.

The men threw their weight upon the pole and broke it off even with the ground, and running with it, threw themselves with it against the door, causing it to crack and creak.

Drawing back, they battered again and again, while the screams and cries of the two women within urged them to every effort.

On one side stood Pete Parrot and Deadwood Dick, revolvers in hand, and on the other were Diego Soslayo and Fernando Remolon. All had the one object now, the rescue.

After that would come—what?

Just then the face of Inez Damasco appeared at the grating.

"Hasten, for God's sake!" she urged. "I shall be killed if you do not rescue me soon!"

"Do you hear?" cried Pete Parrot, pointing. "That girl's life is at stake! Put on steam, now, and down goes ther door! Sock et to 'er! Now again!"

Thus urged, the men put forth all their strength, and the next moment the door split in the middle and fell in, and out ran Inez Damasco, only to be seized by Diego Soslayo.

He placed a revolver to her head, and shouted:

"Stand off! If you attempt to take her from me I'll blow her brains out!"

Gaspar Montero had been assisting in the beating down of the door, and he still had hold upon the pole.

The chance was his, and he improved it. With a swing of the heavy stick he brought Diego a blow on the back which sent him and the girl to the ground together.

Diego's pistol was discharged, but the bullet struck the ground and did no harm, and in the same moment Deadwood Dick threw himself upon the man and the young woman was enabled to escape.

Teresa Papada, too, had run out, a knife in her grasp, and she desperately ran to attack Inez again.

"You hold on hyar," Pete Parrot cried, grasping her arm. "Give me that sticker."

He wrested the knife from her hand and flung it away.

Here was a situation, truly.

No one could have told at that moment how it was going to come out. On which side of the scale would the two hirelings throw their weight?

"Kill them!" cried Teresa. "Kill them all!" Her hirelings stood in doubt what to do, and Dick and Diego were struggling desperately.

"Make a prisoner of that 'ar hairy varmint," Pete Parrot ordered, indicating Diego, while at the same time he held the girl tightly. "Help my pard thar, or I'll put lead into ye!"

This decided them, for the moment, and they sprung to the aid of Dick, and Diego was overcome.

"Fools! Cowards!"

So screamed Teresa.

Inez had sprung into her lover's arms, and was held in his embrace.

"Now capture these other two," ordered Deadwood Dick, pointing at Fernando and the girl Pete was holding.

"This one is already captured," declared Pete. "She can't do any harm, and you are three to one against that galoot. Take him, Dicky, dead or alive!"

"Fools!" screamed Teresa again. "If you go back on me I'll have you hanged! You know your lives are in my hands, knowing what I do. By that I made you do my bidding before."

They hesitated, and for a moment the battle trembled in the balance.

CHAPTER XIII.

AMAZEMENT FOR THE MAGISTRATE.

DEADWOOD DICK decided the point of doubt. He had already sprung upon Fernando, and had a weapon at his head.

"Pete, shoot the first man that tries to interfere with our plans," he cried, in Spanish.

"They can depend on it," declared Pete. "It's life or death to you, men, and you can have your choice. We are armed and you are not."

"And I'll have you hanged, both of you!" screamed Teresa. "You know you are murderers, and that I know all about it. Do you want me to tell the police what I know?"

The two fellows talked together for a brief moment, in low tones, and then of a sudden both ran away as fast as their legs could carry them.

This was the most sensible thing they could have done, and there was no one to interfere, since this was the promise Dick and Montero had given them, that they should be allowed to go free.

And now Dick and Pete, with Montero, were certainly masters of the situation and able to keep their advantage.

They had their three prisoners in hand and disarmed.

But, the end was not yet.

The loud talking, the screams of the women, and the pistol-shot had reached the ears of policemen.

Three of these now came running to the scene, and at sight of them Dick and Pete recognized that they were in a desperate situation, and that victory was likely to be wrested out of their grasp.

Dick spoke hurriedly to Montero in low tone.

"We are in a bad fix now," he said. "My pard and I have broken jail, and we will have the police to fight. Whatever you do, do not lose possession of your love, and, if possible, keep hold upon Teresa Papada, too. If we escape, meet us at the saloon kept by Tobin Tamarack."

Gaspar had only time to speak a word in response before the police came up in a hurry.

"Take these foreign devils, officers," cried Remolon. "They are the ones who escaped from the jail! I am Fernando Remolon."

"You take care to keep your distance!" thundered Pete Parrot, who could speak better Spanish than Dick. "If you don't, there will be some dead policemen around on the ground!"

"Attack them!" ordered Remolon.

"Abate!" cried Pete.

For the moment they stood in doubt, but the next words of Fernando decided them.

"Cowards!" he cried. "I'll hand your names to your superior the first thing after daylight, and you will be stripped of your badges in disgrace. Do you hear? I order you to take these brigands!"

Dick and Pete had quickly consulted.

It would not do to shoot to kill, yet in no other way were they likely to escape.

The officers sprung to the attack, and Dick and Pete fired, but not to hit, and then followed a hand-to-hand battle, which for some moments was a pretty lively fracas.

It was fortunate that the hands of Diego Soslayo had been bound, and also that Pete Parrot had secured the arms of Teresa Papada while holding her, for on this account these two were out of the fight. Still the odds was greatly against our friends.

Gaspar Montero sprung into the fray, too, and it became desperate.

"Not to kill," Dick whispered to him.

"I understand," the response.

Deadwood Dick made Fernando his especial mark, determined that he should not escape if he could help it.

Fighting off the officers, Dick aimed to get at him, but before he could do so Gaspar had closed with him and he and Fernando fell to the ground in their desperate struggle.

Again the policemen were upon Dick and Pete in a body, and the two pards had their hands full.

It now looked as though the victory must go wrong.

Teresa had started to run away, with her arms bound, but Inez was upon her like a tigress.

"No, you shall not escape!" she cried. "You shall be repaid for what you intended doing for me. You would have killed me, had I not been the stronger."

She threw the desperate young woman to the ground, and tearing a strip from some part of her garments made her doubly secure by binding her feet. Diego already had his bound.

At that instant Gaspar Montero was getting decidedly the worst of the fight with Remolon.

Inez was to his rescue in an instant.

With a stone she dealt Fernando a tap on the head that made him dizzy, and Gaspar immediately had the mastery again.

Remolon was speedily made a prisoner, like Diego, and having done that, Inez and Gaspar sprung to the aid of Dick and his pard against the police, where their help was badly needed.

This turned the tide against the officers, and they were quickly backed into a corner where two buildings joined, where they stood at bay.

"Will you come to terms, now?" demanded Montero.

"What terms do you seek?"

"You are determined to retake these escaped prisoners, it seems."

"Yes."

"Well, you cannot do it. You ought to know they are not guilty men, for they have spared your lives when they might have shot you long ago."

"What do you talk of terms for?"

"We have terms to offer."

"Name them."

Montero turned to Deadwood Dick, and they held a brief talk in English.

"This gentleman," said Montero, then, turning to the cornered policemen, "is an American detective. Have you ever heard of Deadwood Dick? Well, it is he, and he is no murderer, be sure of that."

"But, he is an escaped prisoner none the less."

"That is all right, and he is willing to go with you, but you are not to try to disarm him. You see he has the best of the situation, and you had better come to his terms. If you will do that, it will be all right with you. What have you to say to it?"

Montero being a native, could put it strong in the native tongue.

"What does he require of us, then?"

"That you will aid him to take his prisoners before the *corregidor*, where you will be at liberty to tell your own story and make whatever charge you choose. But, they will not go with you as prisoners. They are in the right, and these are rascals who have been trying to play a dastardly trick; I care not if one is Senor Fernando Remolon."

The policemen consulted for a few moments, and decided.

"We accept the terms," their spokesman said. "The plan suits our plans very well indeed."

"That settles it," spoke up Deadwood Dick. "Lend us a hand with the prisoners we have taken, and you will find that you are on the right side when the thing is fully shown up."

Teresa and Remolon were not silent.

"You are fools!" cried the enraged young woman. "You are asses! You have let the best prisoners get away! They were the men who committed the murder two months ago."

"You will sweat for this!" stormed Remolon.

"You seem to forget who and what I am! You shall be stripped of your badges and turned out of the service in disgrace. I swear it! To think of it, that I, Fernando Remolon, should be dragged before the *corregidor* like a common culprit!"

"You are worse by far than the common culprit," reminded Deadwood Dick. "You have misused the power you have in the city

What have you to say to the charge of having falsely imprisoned this lady in the madhouse? You will be made to sweat, I rather calculate, my fine Mexican gentleman. And for you, Diego Soslayo, worse is in store. And this is not to mention the murder of the beggar."

"What!" cried Remolon. "You would lay that to our account?"

"I shall not be surprised if it is made to appear that it was a pretty scheme of your originating. In fact, I have proof that it was. What of *Andreo*?"

The rascal stormed, but it did him little good, and presently the party set forward for the residence of the city magistrate.

Arriving there, loud rapping brought the *corregidor* to a window, and he impatiently demanded to know what was wanted of him at that unseemly hour of the night—or morning.

"It is I, Fernando Remolon," cried that angered gentleman. "Things have come to a pretty pass here in Mexico! Come down at once and—"

"Senor Fernando Remolon?" the magistrate cried, now wide awake. "I will be down immediately, senor."

"We'll see now who will go to the wall," Remolon sneered, looking at Bristol.

"Pete, you will gag this man," Dick ordered.

"What!" the fellow cried. "You would heap further indignity upon me? Men of the police, I demand your protection."

The police would have favored him, but Deadwood Dick thrust a brace of glittering revolvers under their noses and they were compelled to stand off and see the gagging process accomplished.

"We mean to have the first say in this matter ourselves," said Deadwood Dick. "Your political pull is no doubt strong, but you will find that it don't begin to tip the beam against genuine American sand. We came here on business, and we are now about to accomplish it."

"What was your business here?" asked Montero.

"It will be needless to tell it twice, and it must be told immediately to the magistrate," Dick answered.

"True enough; I will wait for it then. Besides, there is no time now, for here is the gentleman at the door. My father knew this *corregidor* well."

"As also does mine," spoke up Inez Damasco. "Had I been able to get his aid, they would never have confined me in the madhouse as they did. But, they put me there under an assumed name, and I could do nothing against them."

"Your pardon, Senor Remolon, for keeping you waiting even this short time," said the magistrate just then opening the door. "You will walk right in with your prisoners, please, and I know it must be a case of great magnitude to bring you in person to— Eh? What? Gagged?"

CHAPTER XIV.

DEADWOOD DICK'S TRIUMPH.

The *corregidor* stopped short, and could only stand and stare.

He knew not what to make of this, and looked from one to another of the party as they filed into his house.

Where he had expected to find Fernando Remolon in charge, from what he had heard him say, he found him a prisoner in the hands of strangers. What in the name of Montezuma could it mean?

A few words of preparation had been exchanged between Deadwood Dick and Gaspar Montero, and the latter took it upon himself to break the silence.

"Sire," he said, "you knew my father well. I am Gaspar Montero."

"Ah! that is true, my son. But, what—"

"I will explain. Let me make known Senor Richard Bristol, a detective from the United States who has come to Mexico upon especial business, and who has been mistaken for a murderer and imprisoned."

"Zounds!" the magistrate cried, but using the Spanish equivalent, however. "This is not the man who escaped jail? My night's rest has been disturbed till I am crazy, almost. What have you to say for yourself, Senor Americano? But, Senor Remolon? Why is he a prisoner?"

The magistrate was eager and excited.

"He is my prisoner, sir," said Deadwood Dick. "He has been guilty of at least one great crime, and maybe others. We shall see about that. In order to make everything plain to you, sire, you must hear my story."

"Proceed."

"We have come here from the United States on a special mission," Dick began, using the best

Spanish he could muster. "Don Hunfredo Damasco, owner of a rich mine in Arizona, died some months ago, leaving written directions for me to come here and fetch his daughter to take possession of the property—"

Inez had reeled back at this news burst upon her, and now she gave a scream and fell in a faint.

Her lover attended to her, while Dick proceeded.

"Don Hunfredo left a will, saying that in the event of his death and that of his daughter, the mine should go to charity, and not to his nephew, Diego Soslayo. I did not get hold of the matter until recently, or learn that I was wanted for the work, but came here as soon as I did. Diego Soslayo, therefore, who was in Arizona at the time of his uncle's death, had reached here first and disposed of his cousin, the Dona Inez."

"What do I hear?" the magistrate mused, passing his hand over his forehead. "My friend, Damasco dead? His nephew a rascal and his daughter robbed of her rights? By heavens, but we shall see about that! And this man Remolon—surely he has nothing against him?"

"He is even blacker with crime than Diego Soslayo," declared Dick. "It was he who contrived to place the Dona Inez in the madhouse."

"Cascaras! Can this be true?"

"Yes, it is true," Dick urged. "Diego Soslayo and Fernando Remolon joined issues in the matter of the mine, determined to get possession of it. Fernando has a sister, Luella, with whom Diego is in love, and the scheme was to take her to the United States in place of Inez, passing her off for Inez—do I make it plain in my poor Spanish?"

"Yes, yes; go on."

"Well, Fernando was to help Diego for a share in the mine. With his strong political power here, difficulties were easy to overcome, and there was no trouble in removing the Dona Inez."

"The dogs!"

"Now, these two were on the lookout for me, as I can prove by a conversation they had only the other night in a saloon kept by Tobin Tamarack, an American, who gave me warning the minute I arrived here to-night—last night, rather. Now, a confederate must have telegraphed them of my departure for Mexico, and they knew just when to look for me. What did they do? They wanted me out of the way, and they hired a ruffian to follow me and shoot some beggar or common person and put the crime on me. Such is my suspicion, and I am going to prove it true."

"Every word of which I believe true," spoke up Gaspar Montero. "Certain it is that these men entrapped me and kept me in close confinement, fearing that I would balk their heinous scheme. Luella Remolon was not a willing accomplice. She was in favor of posing as Dona Inez, if forced to it, but she was not willing to marry Diego. She loved an American, Dick Radway, a young engineer on the Mexican National Railway. On the other hand, one Teresa Papada, this young woman here, loved Diego, and wanted him to accept her for the role. To force this, she engaged two men to steal Dona Inez from the madhouse, and hoped to carry her point by threatening exposure."

"Caspita!"

"How it would have come out, sire, who can say? But, here came Deadwood Dick, as the Americans call him, and you see the result. You may now allow Fernando Remolon to talk, and let him disprove these things if he can. Together we charge him with these offenses, and it will be the pleasure of this American detective to prove the charges against him."

With that, Remolon was allowed to speak.

He raged and stormed, trying to bluster away all that had been said, and even went so far as to threaten the security of the position of the magistrate himself.

It was all of no use, however, for the word against him was too substantial to be easily shaken, and it stood. He was finally ordered to prison to await his hearing, as were the others.

To the disappointment of the policemen, Dick and Pete Parrot were allowed to go free, to appear as witnesses. Deadwood Dick had been able to prove who he was, and his authority was respected now that he saw fit to assert it. So, the policemen had to grin and bear the chagrin they felt.

When the case came to its hearing, the whole city was stirred by it. Men of high rank and note, both Mexican and American, were on hand, and a great sensation was the outcome.

The fall of Fernando Remolon was great, for it was hard to believe. But, the proof against him was overwhelming. Further, Dick had succeeded in fastening the crime of murder upon him and Diego.

Getting hold of a clue, Dick Bristol had been able to track the hired assassin down, and when arrested he readily confessed to the truth that he had been hired by Diego and Fernando for the work he had done. All the minor points were brought out, and where his foes had hoped to deal death to Deadwood Dick, the people rose up and gave him praise. Staid and sleepy old Mexico did him all the honors possible, in which his pard fully shared.

Dick had accomplished the object of his mission, and took back home with him the wronged heiress, accompanied by her lover. Dona Inez was sad, but, withal, she was happy, too. She came into possession of the mine and all her father's other property, as he had wished. And, finally, she married the man of her choice. Deadwood Dick had performed well the task intrusted to his care. It seemed, now that all was over, that Don Hunfredo had had some suspicion that something of this kind would be undertaken against the child, and this had led to his engaging Dick Bristol for the duty.

Luella Remolon and Dick Radway were married at once, after the trial in which both had to figure, and in which Luella's evidence made the case the stronger against her rascally brother. Luella blushed at every mention of the name of Deadwood Dick, as recollection came over her, and Dick Radway took care that his name was mentioned just as infrequently as possible. He dared not reflect what the consequence might have been had Dick Bristol entered in earnest as his rival! Fernando, Diego, and Teresa, with others associated with them, were punished as they deserved. As for Tobin Tamarack, he took much credit of the affair to himself, declaring that he had been the very first one to put Deadwood Dick on his guard.

THE END.

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BEADLE AND ADAMS, Publishers,
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